

A N
E S S A Y
O N T H E
S C H E M E and C O N D U C T,
P R O C E D U R E and E X T E N T
O F
M A N ' s R E D E M P T I O N .

Wherein is shewn from the Holy Scriptures, that this
great Work is to be accomplished *Gradually*.

To which is annexed,

A Dissertation on the Design and
Argumentation of the Book of *J O B*.

By WILLIAM WORTHINGTON, M. A.
Vicar of *Blodwel* in *Shropshire*.

*I think, I see plainly a gradual Working of Providence to-
wards the Redemption of the World from the Curse of
the Fall.*

Bishop *Sherlock's* Use and Intent of Prophecy.

L O N D O N

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P R E F A C E

THERE being so many Writings daily
 published with a manifest Design of
 vilifying and degrading Christianity,
 it is to be hoped that an Attempt to give
 Men more honourable and exalted Notions
 of it will not need any long Apology.
 The chief Advantage which the Writer on
 the Side of Infidelity have had, and which
 they have well understood how to use for the
 Service of their Cause, has been drawn from
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 and rational Arguments they could
 pick up, out of the Writings of the Fathers
 which they turned as Arguments against Re-
 ligion itself. This hath occasioned several
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 it is presumed that this Work hath not been
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 The following Essay pretends to no more
 than to suggest some Hints of this kind. The
 Author being of Opinion that the most ef-
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T H E

P R E F A C E.

THERE being so many Writings daily published with a manifest Design of vilifying and degrading Christianity, it is to be hoped that an Attempt to give Men more honourable and exalted Notions of it will not need any long Apology.

The chief Advantage which the Writers on the Side of *Infidelity* have had, and which they have well understood how to use for the Service of their Cause, has been drawn from what unguarded Expressions, and injudicious and unfavourable Representations they could pick up, out of the Writings of its *Friends*, which they turned as Arguments against Religion itself. This hath occasioned several Points to be re-considered of late, by which means they have been set in a better Light, and explained with greater Accuracy. But it is presumed that this Work hath not been so fully and completely executed, with Regard to the Whole and every Part of Religion; but that it may be still farther carried on, and admit of farther Improvements.

The following *Essay* pretends to no more than to suggest some Hints of this kind, the Author being of Opinion that the most effectual Method of silencing Infidelity will be
to

to aim at such *Improvements* in the Explanation of Christianity, that the most industrious Malice of its Adversaries will be at a Loss to find out Ought against it.

It is true, their Inventions of late have been so fertile of Objections, that *their Quiver* hath been full of them; but they have so plentifully shot out their Arrows, which have generally been none other than bitter Words, and groundless Invectives, that we may reasonably conclude they begin by this Time to be exhausted: Nor has their Success been any better than to have procured such Answers, as have retorted them upon themselves, and given Satisfaction to all candid and unprejudiced Minds.

But tho' it should be granted that Difficulties might be raised which could not be readily solved on our present Systems, or under the present State of Christianity, yet if Christianity be in its Nature *progressive* towards a State of greater Perfection, both with Regard to Knowledge, and in all other Respects, as it is presumed it will, from the following Essay, appear to be; a fair Examiner will make suitable Allowances in this respect—will not look for that from an *imperfect*, which belongs to a *perfect* State, and tho' he does not see all his Scruples removed at present, yet he will not from hence peremptorily conclude that they are unsurmountable, and that they may not possibly be all cleared up hereafter.

For Instance, what tho' Christians differ so much

much at present from each other, in their religious Sentiments, and are so greatly divided among themselves, does it follow that it will be always so? An insidious *Adversary*, indeed, hath concluded 'that a Variety of Opinions is the natural Consequence of the Exercise of private Judgement (the undoubted Right of all Christians under proper Regulations) and that while they think and reason for themselves, they will be more likely to differ still wider, than to close and unite.' *

This *Author*, under the Pretence of a mighty Zeal for Religion, discovers an inveterate Malice against it, and labours hard to ruin the Cause he makes a Shew of defending; a strange Part for an *Advocate* to act, and such as he surely cannot expect any Credit from, under *that*, or any other Character!

Not to enter into a particular Discussion of this Treatise, which the Limits of this Preface will not admit, and which others have rendered less necessary, it may not be amiss, for the Sake of those of my Readers who have not met with a fuller Answer to it, to make one general Observation upon it, which, if applied to each Particular, will discover the Weakness and Fallacy which runs thro' the Whole.

What he undertakes to prove is, *That Christianity is not founded on Argument, or Reason*, as he explains himself. Now the ready Way to come at the Truth in this Case

• Christianity not founded on Argument. p. 8. & *alibi*.

Case is, to enquire what the *real* Foundation of Christianity is. And if it can be positively proved, that it *is* founded on Reason, this at once overthrows all that he has urged in behalf of the contrary negative Proposition, which must of course be false.

The general Foundation on which Christianity is evidently built is this, 'That we ought to receive as Truth whatever carries with it sufficient Evidence of divine Authority.' And can there be any Principle in Reason, the Truth of which is more uncontestable, and self-evident than this? *viz.* that weak, fallible, depraved, human Reason should submit to the Dictates of the highest, and most perfect Reason, the Reason of GOD?

This Matter, therefore, is reduced to this single Question—Whether Christianity hath such Evidence of its divine Original?

But this is a Question which this Author hath no Right to make, because he affects to speak of the Truth of Christianity as *absolute, certain and demonstrative* (p. 19.) which by the Way, I know not how it can be upon any other Principles than those of Reason. And yet he at the same Time endeavours to destroy its Credibility, as he would fain persuade us, that *Miracles*, one chief kind of its Evidences, were not meant as any Evidence of it at all (p. 46.) and would reduce its Evidence in general to human Testimony (p. 31, 35) And, lest it should have too much Weight, he takes Care to depreciate *it* likewise, to the

Sub-

The PREFACE.

v

Subversion of *Law* as well as Gospel, and almost all other Benefits of Society. And lest this too should be insufficient, Men are grown so *harden'd, thro' an Evil Heart of Unbelief*, as to reject even the Evidence of Sense, for so another of these Writers, in the Case of Miracles, scruples not to declare.

But if they were capable of Conviction, they might *see* Christianity *visibly* supported by *standing*, and indeed *growing* Evidences, which more than balance any supposed Draw-backs made by Tradition from those vouchsafed at its first Planting; as they result from the united Testimony of Prophecy, Miracle, Sense, and Reason. To instance in an Evidence of this kind, which, I think, hath not been sufficiently considered, let them but seriously and impartially compare the present State of the *Jews*, with the Prophecies concerning their Dispersion, and the Desolation of their Country, State, and Polity; and if they will shut their Eyes against such Light, their Blindness must greatly exceed that of this infatuated People, as they labour under none of their Prejudices.

Christianity, therefore, was revealed by God; and if it be a first Principle of Reason, to believe what is revealed by him, it thenceforward becomes the Province of Reason, in respect of Religion, to apply its Faculties to find out and understand his reveal'd Will in the most rational manner, and where any Thing therein seems too hard or high for its

Com-

vi *The* PREFACE.

Comprehension, there humbly to acquiesce, and
to captivate our Reason to the Obedience of Faith.

Not that Christianity hath any thing
to fear from a free and candid Enquiry, ha-
ving no Occasion to shun the Light, which
on the contrary will do it the greatest Service
in discovering daily new Beauties in it, and
displaying the just Proportion, and Symme-
try of all its Parts. And when it hath been
thoroughly examined and understood, it will
appear in one uniform, consistent View to all.
For Truth being uniform in itself, the Way
to discover this Uniformity is by a thorough
Discussion of it, and when it is universally
discovered, it will be universally received
and assented to; and Men will come to think
alike concerning it by that very means which
this *Author* imagines will be attended with
the quite contrary Effect: And accordingly
an inspired Writer hath assured us, that *we*
shall all come unto an Unity of Faith and
Knowledge of the Son of GOD. Eph. iv. 13.

This Writer indeed may be in no great E-
steem with our *Author* and his Friends; tho'
methinks it should give them some Opinion
of his Insight into Futurity, that he has so
justly described the present State of Christia-
nity, that *there must be Heresies and Divisi-*
ons among us, 1 Cor. xi. 19. as well as that
in these *latter Times some shall depart from*
the Faith 1 Tim. iv. 1. *being proud, Blaspheme-*
rs, Men of corrupt Minds, reprobate con-
cerning the Faith. 2 Tim. iii. 2, 8. But for
our

The PREFACE. vii

our Comfort he hath at the same time assured us, that a Stop shall be put to their Progress, for that *they shall proceed no further* than to a certain Degree, *and that their Folly shall be manifest unto all Men.* v. 9.

It will not be thought any Imputation upon Christianity, that all its Mysteries and Doctrines have not been as yet so fully discovered and understood by the several Sects and Parties of Christians, as to come to a settled Agreement concerning them, if it be considered, that no human Science hath been brought to such Perfection as not to admit of farther Improvements, many of which began to be cultivated long before the Commencement of Christianity. Nay, what Proficiency hath been made in our Idol-Reason itself, notwithstanding such Sufficiency is attributed to it? Tho' it was reduced to Rules of Art, some Ages before Christ, yet have its Improvements been but very inconsiderable till of late Years. And what do its Attainments amount to at present? Alas! just to so much as serves to puff it up with Pride and Conceit, a certain Sign of its Weakness and Imperfection! And if this boasted *Light within* us, be so faint and glimmering, that it is, indeed, comparatively, but *Darkness*, why should it be expected that the great Mysteries of the Gospel should be clearly seen thro' by us? Is it not rather an Argument of its divine Original, that its *Depth and Height* is such as not to be fathomed by our short Line? It has from

the Beginning been sufficiently intelligible to all Capacities, with regard to the great and most necessary Purposes of Practice and Salvation, tho' all its Doctrines may not yet be so clearly explained, as to silence the Cavils of Gain-sayers, to satisfy the Curiosity, and over-come the Prejudices of those whose Lusts prompt them to seek out Objections against it, as they tempt them to wish it were false.

Notwithstanding so many Ages have passed since Christ, yet Christianity hath not been considered in all its Views, though it hath in so many, as have not a little contributed to the Illustration of it. In the first Ages of the Gospel, the Apologists and Advocates of the Christian Cause were engaged in combating *Heathenism* and *Judaism* on the one Hand, and the many *Heresies* that sprang up within the Church itself, on the other. It had scarce been well established before it began to be woefully rent with *Schisms*; and soon after this, all Learning, divine and human, were, in a Manner, banished the World; and Men's Studies, from this Time downwards, were employed only in perverting and corrupting our most holy Religion; till at length the divine Providence brought about the Reformation, the natural and necessary Business of which, was to confute and purge off these Errors again, and to vindicate the Protestant Faith. Soon after this, *Sectaries* began to spring up among us, and Men's Labours were then spent in disputing *Modes* of Worship and Dis-

The PREFACE. ix

Discipline, and other Particulars, some of which were idle enough. And the Reasonableness and Excellence of our most holy Religion, having never been called in Question, was taken for granted by all; and therefore, not much considered till *Socinianism* first, and *Infidelity* afterwards, began to try their Strength with it, to strike at its Foundation, and shake the main Pillars of it; wherein they have hitherto succeeded no better, than in causing it to strike the deeper Root, and more firmly to establish itself, having given Occasion to many excellent Treatises which have greatly contributed to its Honour and Advancement, but of which the World had otherwise been deprived.

And among the Rest, those admirable Discourses, published in Consequence of the Hon. Mr *Boyle's* Institution, justly stand in the foremost Rank, and will vindicate their own Worth and Excellence to the World, as long as good Sense, sound Reasoning, and Revealed or Natural Religion, are esteemed in it; notwithstanding the Writer above taken notice of, hath the Assurance to assert in very positive Terms, their having a contrary Tendency and Effect, though with scarce the Colour of Reason to support so extraordinary a Charge. See p. 86.

The promoting of the same great End, viz. the Honour and Advancement of Christianity, is the Design aimed at in the following Sheets, which if, in any Measure, they answer in the

main, it is to be hoped, that whatever lesser Slips or Errors may have escaped the Author's Diligence, will be pardoned and over-look'd by the Reader.

I have only to add, That the *Dissertation* on the Book of *Job*, having a near Relation to the Subject of the *Essay*, and a Tendency to illustrate it, is not improperly annexed to it. If the Hypothesis I go upon be right, it will, moreover, be of no small Service for the understanding of that difficult Book; and tho' it should prove wrong, yet will it not affect the Argument of the *Essay*, the Truth of which does not depend upon it. Both the One and the Other are offered with that Submission to the Judgment of the Publick, which ought to attend Doctrines that carry the Appearance of Novelty or Singularity.

A SUM-

A SUMMARY *of the* CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE State of the Question proposed to be discussed in the ensuing Treatise p. 3. Apology for it p. 4. The Usefulness and Expediency of the Enquiry p. 6.

CH A P. I.

Of the State of Man before the Fall; particularly, of the Nature, Improvement, and Decay of Man's Perfection in it, together with a Conjecture concerning the Duration of this State; whereby some Circumstances relating to the Mosaic Account of it are cleared up, and vindicated p. 11.

Different Opinions concerning the first State of Man p. 12. The Nature of his Perfection 13. Measure of it 15. Consistent with some Failings *ib.* Nature and Design of the Tree of Life 17. Man's Faculties gradually impair'd, and by what Means 18. Duration of the paradisiacal State 20. *Eve* excited to eat of the forbidden Fruit by her Longing *ib.* Her Eating occasioned an Abortion 23. Objections answered on the foregoing Hypothe-

The CONTENTS.

his 24. *Adam* how furnished with Ideas
25. And Language 26. Author of *Christianity as Old &c.* censured. *ib.* *Adam* not
immediately placed in Paradise 27. His
naming the Creatures accounted for in a na-
tural Way 28. Another Objection of the
above Author's removed *ib.* Original Ex-
cellence of Man vindicated 30. *Adam* and
Christ compared 32. Happiness of the
primitive State, 33.

C H A P. II.

*Of the Fall, the Consequences, and Permissi-
on of it; wherein the principal Difficulties
relating to these Subjects are attempted to
be removed* p. 34.

The Fall of Man accounted for *ib.* The De-
vil personating a *Seraph* imposes upon *Eve*.
His Discourse with her 37. Wherein her
Crime consisted 39. Illustrated by a paral-
lel Case *ib.* Original Sin. Consequences
of it, with regard to *Adam* and *Eve* in
their own Persons 41. To the Brute 42.
And inanimate Creation 43. And to Po-
sterity *ib.* Explain'd and vindicated with
Regard to the Guilt 44. Propagation 45.
And Imputation of it 49. And other o-
dious Consequences charged upon it by Mr
Taylor 51. Permission of Evil demonstra-
tively cleared and vindicated 53. Corolla-
ries deduced from the foregoing Demon-
stration

The CONTENTS.

stration ascertaining the Laws of Grace and Liberty 57. The Heads proposed to be discussed in the remaining Part of the Treatise 61.

CHAP. III.

Containing Remarks on the State of Mankind after the Fall in the Antediluvian World: Whence it will appear that GOD, in all his Dispensations during this Period, had a View to their Amendment and Reformation p. 63.

Favourable Circumstances in the Sentence of our first Parents *ib.* The Wickedness of Men, and the Curse on the Ground increased gradually 69. Causes of it 70. *E-nock's* Translation, what it typified 72. Longevity of the *Antediluvians* accounted for 73. Other Accounts of it examined 75. Destruction of the old World unavoidable 78. Deluge typical of the future State of the Church 79.

CHAP. IV.

Remarks on the State of Man and Nature after the Flood; particularly concerning the Removal of the Curse from off the Ground p. 81.

Bishop *Sherlock's* Notion concerning the Removal of the Curse on the Ground examined 82. The Author's Notion of it 90.

The CONTENTS.

stated and confirmed, *Noah's Drunkenness* apologized for 98.

CHAP. V.

Containing some farther Remarks on the State of the World in the early Ages of it, particularly with regard to the Causes which retarded its Reformation during this Period p. 100.

Disadvantages of Mankind in the early Ages 101. To which GOD's Dealings with them were suited 102. His Preference of the *Israelites* accounted for 104. And vindicated from the Abuses of the *moral Philosopher* 106. State of Morality in these Ages 107. Causes of the Slowness of Reformation in these Periods 115.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Reformation wrought in the World in the Ages preceding the Gospel p. 120.

Good Effects of the Confusion and Dispersion of *Babel* for this Purpose 121. Regard had hereto in the Division of the Nations 122. The Call of *Abraham* serviceable to this End 124. What the Mosaic Dispensation contributed to it. 1. With Regard to the *Jews* themselves 128. 2. To Mankind in general 129. The Heathen Religions improved by the *Jewish*, and their

The CONTENTS.

their Philosophy in a great Measure borrowed from *Moses* 135. The World pre-disposed for the Coming of the *Messiah* 136.

C H A P. VII.

Concerning the Reformation wrought in the World by means of Christianity p. 140.

Small Extent and Influence of Christianity apologized for, 1. From a Comparison of it with the true Religion in the preceding Ages 141. 2. The Opposition of its Enemies 142. 3. Difficulties of the Warfare we maintain 145. 4. *Antichrist* by perverting the Gospel helps to confirm it, by furnishing an Evidence of its Truth 147. 5. Benefits of the Reformation from Popery 151. *Query* from the supposed better Lives of Infidels, whether the World is really bettered by Christianity 158. Answered 1st in general 159. 2^{dly} particularly 163.

C H A P. VIII.

Containing some general Observations on the Improvement of the World, in its civil Capacity 167.

The first State of Nature and the present compared 168. Advantages of Traffick 170. Improvements in civil Government 171. Common Prejudice that the World grow^s

The CONTENTS.

grows worse and worse, removed 175
Improvements in Learning 179. Benefits
of the Invention of Letters *ib.* Mr *Shuck-*
ford's Account of their Invention 180.
And Mr *Warburton's* disprov'd 182. Pro-
ved to have been taught by God to *Moses*
184. An Argument that the *Egyptians*
borrowed their Customs from the *Israelites*,
not these latter from them 196. Propaga-
tion, Decay, and Revival of Learning 197.
Its succeeding Progress 200. The two last
Ages compared 202.

CH A P. IX.

*Containing some Account of Notices given to,
and of the Notions and Expectations
which prevailed among the Antients,
Jews, Heathens, and Christians; with Re-
gard to the future Restoration and Renova-
tion of the World.* 204.

Traditions among the *Jews*, and Allusions in
their Law to a renovated State 205. No-
tions of a renovated State among the Hea-
thens 209. Inferred 1. From the professed
End of their Philosophy and Religions, 2.
The Doctrine of two Principles 210. 3.
The Golden Age 213. 4. The Renova-
tion of the World held by *Plato*, and
others; and likewise by the primitive
Fathers under the Notion of a *Millenni-*
um 217.

CHAP.

Ube CONTENTS.

CHAP. X.

Wherein it is shewn, that this Hypothesis, which maintains the Restoration of the World to its original Perfection before its final Dissolution, is agreeable to our Notions of the Attributes of GOD, to the Nature of Man, and Reasons of Things p. 219.

First, this Notion is shewn to be agreeable to the divine Wisdom, Power, Justice, Honour, Goodness 220. And to the Nature of Things. An Objection answered 223. Another Objection taken from the Shortness of the paradisiacal State, answer'd 226. This Notion agreeable to the Nature of Man 228.

CHAP. XI.

Wherein it is shewn, that the Christian Religion in the general Design and Tendency of it, is calculated for the Recovery of fallen Man to his primitive State p. 234.

This shewn first from the Nature and Design of Christianity in general *ib.* From its being represented as a State of Perfection 241. True Notion of Perfection stated, and the Attainableness of it 246. Christian Perfection equal to original Perfection proved 1st from the Character and Office of our Saviour, as Redeemer 248. The
com-

The CONTENTS.

mon Notion of Redemption examined 250.
Definition of personal Redemption in general, and of Christian Redemption 253.
Socinian Objections answered 255. Our Saviour's Life and Example a Proof that Man shall regain his original Perfection 260. Proved likewise from the Nature and Tendency of Christ's Laws 265. From the Means of Grace 270. From GOD's Concern for the Honour and Success of his Religion 273. And from the Assistances of his Holy Spirit 275.

C H A P. XII.

Containing particular Proofs from Scripture of Man's future Recovery of his primitive State 284.

Texts relating to the Enlargement and Amplitude of Christ's Kingdom *ib.* Nature of Christ's Kingdom occasionally explained 288. That it is to be an universal Theocracy 292. Prophecies concerning the Conversion of all Nations 293. *Gentiles*; and *Jews*, their Restoration, and rebuilding of their Temple and City 296. Return and Settlement of the ten Tribes 298. Holiness of the future State of the Church 302. Inferred from some Gospel-Precepts which suit only such a State 309. From the Promise of the peculiar Presence of GOD, and plentiful Effusion of the Holy Ghost 310. In-

The CONTENTS.

Increase of Knowledge in the latter Ages
313. Objections answered 315. Prophe-
cies of the flourishing and peaceable State
of the Church 321.

C H A P. XIII.

*Of the MILLENNIAL STATE, and that
which is represented by NEW HEAVENS
and a NEW EARTH: Wherein some Er-
rors relating to these States are attempted
to be rectified, and the true Notions of them
explained p. 331.*

1. Of the Millennium, mistaken Opinion of
the Antients concerning it 332. Account-
ed and apologized for 334. Dr *Whitby's*
Notion of it espoused *ib.* The Fall of
Antichrist calculated 340. And the Com-
mencement of the millennial State 343.
And of the Restoration and Re-establish-
ment of the *Jews* 344. State of the new
Heavens and Earth explained 351. Di-
stinct from the millennial State 352. Not-
withstanding it is none other than an
earthly State 353. Dr *Burnet's* Notion of
the new Heavens and Earth examined and
disproved 357. His Argument from 2 Pet.
iii. 13. particularly considered 361, 369.
The last Generation of Men all Righteous
373. *Matt. xxiv.* examined and explained
ib. Dr *Burnet's* Argument from there be-
ing no Sea in the new Heaven &c. refuted.
That Passage in *Rev. xxi. 1.* explained

The CONTENTS.

378. The remaining Characters of this State explained. 1. The divine Presence

383. 2. The Removal of natural and moral Evil 385. 3. Restoration of the paradisiacal State 387. 4. And Removal of the Curse 389.

C H A P. XIV.

Concerning the Removal of the natural Evils of Life in general, and in their several Kinds p. 394.

The Removal of natural Evil in general proved from Reason *ib.* and Scripture 397. A Redemption of the whole natural Creation. Prophecies relating to the future Fertility of the Earth 401. Restoration of the brute Creation 403. A considerable Class of Evils removed by these Means 405. Recovery of human Nature with Regard to Health 408. The Woman's Sentence repealed 410. Recovery of long Life 415. Exemption from Death, and an immediate Translation into Heaven 424. Objections answered 430. Proved to be the Reward of perfect Obedience 435. Apology for the whole 448.

The Conclusion, by way of Application to three Sorts of Men, *Jews, Deists, and Christians* 451.

Con-

The CONTENTS.

CONTENTS of the DISSERTATION.

Mr *Warburton's* Hypothesis concerning this Book examined, and proved to be without Foundation. Some previous Matters to be discussed. 1. Difficulties in the Book of *Job* according to the common Interpretation of it 476. 2. The Age, Family, and Religion of *Job*, and his Friends, and the Author of the Book of *Job* enquired into 486. 3. The Philosophy then in Vogue 490. 4. Design of the Book 494. viz. To represent in the Person of *Job* the various Revolutions of human Nature. 5. The Controversial Part of it designed against the Doctrine of the *Metempsychosis* 499. Proved from several Expressions in the Speeches of *Job* and his Friends. *Elihu* moderates in the Dispute 522. Equity of God's Decision of it *ib.* Dignity of the Subject of this Poem according to this View of it 524. How it removes the foregoing Difficulties 525.

The Conclusion, by way of Application to three Sorts of Men, *Jews, Deists, and Christians* 431.

E R R A T A.

- PAGE** 19. line 4. dele *without admitting that.*
 22. l. 16. for בְּחֵמֶר *NeCHeMaD* read נְחֵמֶר
NeCHMaD.
 23. l. 9. for *Occasion*, read *Occasions.*
 25. l. 25. after, *reflex Acts*, add, *upon them.*
 34. l. 11. dele *of.*
 36. l. 4. for *ever*, r. *however.*
 68. l. 16. for *LiKeRoA* r. *LiKRoA.*
 76. l. 18. for *Meats*, r. *Meat.*
 111. l. 22. for, *worship him*, r. *worship by him.*
 118. n. l. 10. for *the Bishop's Work*, r. *his own Work.*
 155. l. 14. dele *is.*
 231. n. for *Is* r. *Lord.*
 409. ult. for *Isaiah* r. *Isaiam.*

ESSAY

ON THE

*Scheme and Conduct of Man's
Redemption, &c.*



The INTRODUCTION.

IN the History of the Creation we are informed, that GOD in the Beginning of Time spake all Things into Being ; and that the whole World, with all that is in it, was the Product of his Almighty Power. And as it is impossible for the great Architect of the Universe to be the Author of any Thing that hath the least Flaw or Blemish in it, or that is not completely perfect in it's kind ; so we are told, that as well upon a particular Review of every Day's Work, as a general Survey of the Whole, he pronounced his Judgment of Approbation upon all and every Part of it. *And God saw every Thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good. Gen. i. 31.*

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2 *The* INTRODUCTION.

But no sooner was this great Work of the Creation finish'd, and every Thing relating to it adjusted and set in order, than all was in a manner spoiled and ruined : For, the very next Thing we have an Account of is, that much Disorder and Confusion was introduced into the World ; the beautiful Scene soon disappear'd, and the Face of Things underwent a remarkable Change for the worse ; in-somuch that the ill Effects of it are but too visible even to this Day.

It ill becomes us to enquire why GOD Almighty had not better secured his Works against the Attempts of inferior Beings, but suffer'd them to be abused and defaced almost as soon as they came out of his Hands. *Known unto God are all his Works from the Beginning of the World,* Acts xv. 18. *And he giveth not Account of any of his Matters.* Job xxxiii. 13. He that made was undoubtedly able to preserve ; and to baffle all the Efforts of his Enemies. But if it tended to the more glorious Display of the divine Attributes, and was better upon the whole to bring Good out of Evil, than to have prevented it ; the bare Possibility of the Truth of such a Supposition, tho' it could not clearly be proved, ought to make us more modest in our Censures of the Ways of Providence, and silence our Complaints against the Permission of Evil, tho' to the causing of so much Inconvenience as it brought along with it into the World.

Ne-

State of the Question. 3

Nevertheless, The Origin of Evil is a Problem, than which there is not any that Men have in all Ages exercised their Curiosity and rack'd their Wits more about; nor concerning which their Disquisitions have proved more unsuccessful; having taught us little else than that we ought to be content with our Ignorance of some Things, and captivate our Reason to the Reason of God.

And tho' I do not hereby mean to condemn the Endeavours of learned Men to solve this Problem, having been made necessary by the monstrous and dangerous Tenets to which it hath given Birth; yet it is something strange that another Question nearly allied to and naturally resulting from this hath hitherto been so entirely overlook'd by all. A Question of so much greater Concern and Importance for us to be resolved in, as any Thing relating to the Removal of some great Calamity which we labour under is more useful to be known, than how it happened.

The Question I mean is this.

Since it hath pleased God to permit Evil to be introduced into the World, how long it shall prevail? Whether it will continue till the final Dissolution of all Things? Or

whether there be not a Possibility of its being overcome sooner ; and that Mankind shall at length arrive at such a Pitch of Proficiency under the Gospel Dispensation, that there shall be no Remains left of Sin or Evil of any kind : So as that human Nature, as well as Nature in General, shall recover the Perfection in which it was created ?

I must intreat the Reader not to be surprized at the *Strangeness and Singularity* of the Question. In this inquisitive Age a great many odd Things are started, and scarce any Subject escapes a narrow Scrutiny. I am sensible, that the general Corruption which still reigns in human Nature, the Prejudice which Men in all Ages have against their own Times, and the vulgar Opinion, that the World grows worse and worse, Mankind more degenerate, and the Seasons more unfavourable, have made Men so far despair of an universal Reformation and Recovery from the ill Consequences of the Fall, that the Possibility of it hath scarce ever enter'd their Thoughts. And I am apprehensive the Supposition will be looked on as such a strange and extravagant Paradox, that to offer any Thing in support of it, will seem like the Preaching of a new Gospel.

‘ The

APOLOGY *for it.*

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‘ The Imputation of Novelty, *says* a judicious Author, ‘ is a terrible Charge, amongst those who can—allow of none to be ‘ right, but the received Doctrines. Truth ‘ scarce ever yet carried it by Vote any ‘ where at its first Appearance. New Opinions are always suspected, and usually opposed without any other Reason, but because ‘ they are not already common. But Truth, ‘ like Gold, is not the less so, for being ‘ newly brought out of the Mine. ’Tis ‘ Tryal and Examination must give it Price, ‘ and not any antique Fashion: And tho’ ‘ it be not yet current by the publick Stamp; ‘ yet it may, for all that, be as old as Nature, ‘ and is certainly not the less genuine.’ *

Scripture is a rich and unexhaustible Mine, which no less than Nature, ever affords room for the Discovery of new Treasures: And tho’ the mere Affectation of Novelty be justly culpable, and hath often led Men into dangerous Errors, yet every Attempt of this kind ought not hastily to be condemn’d as such, because it may prove to be justified by the Sanction of our Saviour *Christ’s* own Approbation; who tells us, *that every Scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a Man that is an Householder, which bringeth forth out of his Treasure Things* NEW and old. Mat. xiii. 52.

I shall beg leave to offer but one single

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* *Locke’s* Epistle dedicatory of his Essay on Human Understanding.

6 *The Usefulness and*

Consideration to incline the Reader's Candour towards the Opinion I am advancing, which is, that I think he will find nothing in it that is any ways hurtful in itself, or dangerous in its Consequences; it being meant—not to derogate either from the Honour of GOD, of the Christian Religion, or of human Nature, but on the contrary to do Honour to them : And I am satisfied, tho' it should not prove true, yet when it comes to be considered in its Consequences, all good Men will wish it were so. If this therefore be an Error, it is a well-meant, and therefore, I hope, a pardonable one. It is an Error on the right Side; on the Side of Charity. But I must own withal, that it is a very unfashionable one. It is an Error in Favour of Christianity and revealed Religion; and misrepresents them, (if indeed it doth misrepresent them,) by attributing *too much* to them, which, in this Age I confess, is a great Singularity.

But on the other Hand this Opinion conceives no less highly of human Nature, the Perfections of which, in its present State, are greatly magnified by a particular Sett of Men; and to such, one would think, it could not be strange or disagreeable. And yet I foresee it is likely to be disrelished most by that very Tribe; because, how great soever the boasted Sufficiency of their Light and Reason be, they would not stand obliged to *Jesus Christ* for any of it.

The Discussion of this Question will perhaps

Expediency of this Enquiry 7

haps contribute something towards settling the Measures of our Powers and Faculties, a Subject which hath been much controverted of late ; will fix the Improvement of them upon its true Bottom, and discover the several Degrees of our Strength and Weakness, Distemper and Cure, the Lapse and Recovery of our Nature. It will give us a View not only of our own Microcosm, but likewise of the great World about us, together with the various Changes and Revolutions, which both of them have already suffered, and hereafter shall undergo. Lastly, herein will be traced the several Steps of the divine Scheme, Procedure, and Oeconomy, in contriving and accomplishing the Recovery and Restoration of fallen Man.

The great Mystery of our Redemption indeed contains such a wonderful Train and Series of Wisdom and Policy; and our Faculties are so disproportionate to comprehend the Length and Breadth, Depth and Height of it, that it is impossible for us, who see only thro' a Glass darkly, to have any other than a narrow and imperfect, dim and glimmering View of it. And tho' our Understandings were much more enlarged than they are, tho' we had Capacities big enough to take in an adequate Idea of it, yet as this great Drama is at present but in the Acting, and many Scenes of it are still behind, many more perhaps than we are apt to imagine, and the Plot withal so deeply laid in the great Counsel of God, it

8 *Method of the Whole.*

were impossible for us at present wholly to unravel it, and it were Presumption to pretend to it; infomuch that probably it will not be fully comprehended by the highest Order of Intelligences, till such Time as the Whole comes to be wound up, and this *Mystery of God shall be finished.* Rev. x. 17.

However, there being already so much of it revealed as is proper for us to know in this Life, and much more than Christians have been hitherto able to collect from it, this being what the Holy Angels likewise make their Study, and *desire to look into.* 1. Pet. i. xii. It becomes Man more especially, who is the proper, and as far as appears to us, the sole Object of the great Work of Redemption, to be very diligent in his Search into the divine Oracles, in order to inform himself, so far as his Researches can carry him, of every Thing relating to this great Truth.

To proceed, therefore, the more methodically and distinctly in this Enquiry, and to discover the Extent and Fulness, as well as Nature and Necessity of the Redemption wrought by *Christ*, it will be requisite to consider,

First, What the original State of Man was.

Secondly, By what Means, and how much it became alter'd for the worse.

Thir-

Method of the Whole. 9

Thirdly, How far the Redemption ascribed to *Jesus Christ* will be effectual towards the Recovery of that State.

This Method the Nature of my Undertaking determines me to chuse, because the Doctrine of Redemption being founded upon the Supposition of *Adam's* Fall, we must first consider what the Scripture shews we lost in *Adam*, before we can understand what we are restored to by *Jesus Christ*.

C H A P.

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CHAS.

CH A P. I.

Of the State of Man before the Fall ; particularly, of the Nature, Improvement, and Decay of Man's Perfection in it ; together with a Conjecture concerning the Duration of this State ; whereby some Circumstances relating to the Mosaic Account of it, are cleared up and vindicated from the Objections made against them.

ONE of the *Roman* Historians, when he sat down to write the History of that illustrious People, considered them as one Man; and as such he points out the Infancy, Youth, Maturity, and old Age of that State and Nation. *

The following Discourse treats of the History, not of one People, but of the whole Race of Mankind; and in order to prevent and remedy, as much as may be, that Distraction and Dissipation of Thought, which so enlarged and extensive a Prospect naturally occasions, and to relieve and strengthen the Eye of the Mind by contracting it, the Reader

* *L. Florus in Proœmio.*

der is here, once for all, desired to look upon the human Nature throughout this Treatise in the like View; that is, to consider it as one Person, or one progressive Whole, which notwithstanding it has greatly increased and multiplied, and diffused itself thro' an infinite Number of Individuals, yet originally was but one; which as a common Root or Stock, like *Nebuchadnezzar's* Tree, * hath sprouted out into innumerable Branches, and spread it self into all the Ends of the Earth. And it is but natural to suppose, that there is some Resemblance and Analogy between the Growth and Progress of the Species in general, and that of its Individuals. To enter now upon the Design of this Chapter.

There is nothing wherein there have been wider Differences of Opinion, than concerning the primitive State of Man; which some have conceived such extravagant and chimerical Notions of, as if he had been something more than Man and placed, not in an earthly, but heavenly, Paradise; whence it was natural for them to conclude our Fall to have been so great, that we must for ever despair of a Recovery.

Others again have sunk this State so low, that they allow *Adam* to have had no Perfections superiour to other Men; that consequently we have lost nothing, are not fallen or degenerated at all, but as upright and perfect as ever; which is flattering the Distemper

* *Dan.* iv.

per, and making us believe we are well, and need not a Physician, when at the same Time we labour under all the Symptoms of Disorder: And both ways Men have been prevented, from entertaining any Thoughts of the Restoration or Advancement of their Natures.

Therefore, in tracing the Perfections of *Adam* in his State of Innocence, we are not to regard the Reveries of Rabbins and others concerning them, on the one Hand, whereby they are extolled to such a Height as quite exceeds Nature, and is therefore no more credible than what some have dreamt of his Gigantic Stature: And on the other we are especially to beware of the more dangerous Suggestions of *Deists* and *Socinians*, who would fain reduce the first Man to a Level with his Posterity, and thereby destroy the Necessity of a Redeemer: Between both which Extremes I shall endeavour to steer the middle Course, and to follow Nature, Reason and Scripture as my only Guides.

That Man was *made upright*, i. e. in an exact Rectitude of all his Faculties, and endued with a Capacity of Knowledge and Wisdom, and every other intellectual and moral Perfection suitable to his State and Nature, in an eminent Degree, is what might be imagined no Man could doubt of who believed him formed by an Almighty Hand, guided by infinite Wisdom and Goodness; whence he must necessarily be endowed with all Qualities perfective of his Nature, as well as essen-
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14 *Nature and Measure.*

tial to it : For otherwise the Workmanship of God had been defective, which is no less absurd than impious to suppose.

But since we are moreover taught, *That God created Man in his own Image and Likeness.* Gen. i. 26, 27. this must greatly raise our Conceptions, and give us the noblest Idea of the original Dignity of the human Nature; it not being possible to conceive how it could be more emphatically set forth.

For the compleating of this divine Picture a Concurrence of many Lineaments must be supposed requisite ; and it argues too much Narrowness to confine it to that one Character of Resemblance pointed out in the Context, *viz.* Dominion over the Creatures ; especially as Scripture hath given us sufficient Intimations of other Signatures, no less expressive of the divine Similitude ; it being explain'd by St *Paul* to consist in a *Disposition for Knowledge*, and likewise in *Righteousness and true Holiness.* Col. iii. 10. Eph. iv. 24. And, indeed, it is allowing the Words of *Moses* no more than their due Weight, to understand them in the utmost Extent the Subject they are applied to is capable of, provided the Idea we conceive of the divine Image doth not exceed Nature, nor impeach what we are told, and the Event hath justified, concerning the Debasement of it in the Fall. The Perfections of *Adam* were undoubtedly great, but still they were the Perfections of a Man ; and if we would conceive rationally of them, they ought

ought to be measured *according to the Measure of a Man*. He was endowed with the same Powers and Faculties of Mind, and the same Appetites and Inclinations of Body with the Rest of the Species. He had the same natural Wants to supply, and the Individual was to be supported, * and the Species propagated † by the same means as at present. And the Employment of Man, in the paradisiacal State, was to have been much the same in Kind, as it hath been ever since. For, we are told, *That the Lord God took the Man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.* Gen. xi. 15. The only Difference was in the Degree; Nature being then so kind and free in its Productions, that the Cultivation of it was not a Toil, but a Pleasure, of which it might be said, *Labor ipse Voluptas*; and which consisted more in pruning its Luxuriances, and keeping it from running into Disorder, than in assisting its Weakness, or repairing its Decays. Farther,

Since *Adam* was created liable to the great Offence of Eating the forbidden Fruit, it is no Absurdity to suppose him subject to lesser Failings: If it was possible for him to transgress wilfully, much more so was it to falter in his Duty through Ignorance, Infirmary, or Surprize. And yet we do not find, that he was to lose Paradise, but upon the Commission of that one particular Transgression, to which

* Gen. xi. 9, 16, 17, 21. † Ib. 23, 24.

16 *The Measure of Man's*

which alone the Denunciation of Death likewise was confined. Whence we may conclude, that the paradisiacal State, was not inconsistent with some Failings of a lesser and more venial Nature. For let it be considered, that all created Perfection implies some Degrees, more or less, of Imperfection, there being none absolutely perfect but he who is infinitely so, whose peculiar Prerogative it is to be exempt from all Imperfection. The highest Order of Angels, even the Seraphim that wait at the Throne of GOD, out of a Consciousness of their Defects, *cover their Faces in his Presence*, Isa. vi. 1. * And *Eliphaz in Job* positively says, that, *He chargeth his Angels with Folly, and that the Heavens are not clean in his Sight*. Ch. iv. 18. xv. 15. Since GOD, therefore, if he were to go to Extremities, might mark something amiss, even in the holy Angels, and Heaven it-self is not absolutely pure and spotless, it is no more contrary to Scripture than Reason to suppose, that Man might not have been entirely faultless, and yet have continued in Paradise, and kept his first Estate; which still might have been reckon'd a State of Innocence, notwithstanding these Blemishes, at least comparatively so.

The Remonstrant Divines maintain, that our first Parents in their original State were not exempt from the first Motions of Concupiscence, and that this was very consistent with the Innocence of that State, as they do not
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Perfection and Innocence. 17

reckon the first Tendency of the Affections towards Evil to be sinful: And herein they seem to be countenanced by the Apostle St *James*, who perhaps had the first Transgression in his Eye, when he thus describes the gradual Formation, Birth, and Product of Sin. *Every Man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own Lust, and enticed; then when Lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth Sin, and Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth Death, Jam. i. 15.* Indeed, if *Adam* had not been liable to any irregular Desires, he had not been liable to Sin, and Temptation would have had no Effect upon him; but as the Event was a Proof of his being obnoxious to Sin, he must have been so likewise to all those Inclinations that led to it.

And that this was really the Case seems probable from the Appointment of the Tree of Life, *Gen. ii. 9.* of which if we form a Judgment by the Tree of Life mentioned in the *Revelations*, Ch. xxii. 2. which is analogous and correspondent to it, we may perhaps be induced to think from the Variety of Fruit it bare, the constant Supply of it, and the healing Virtue of its Leaves, that the Design of it was to repair all the Decays, natural and moral, both of the outward and inward Man; and that constant Recourse might be had to it for that purpose upon all Occasions, as Need required; whereby at length human Nature had been advanced and improved both in Body and Soul to such a Degree

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of

of Perfection, as to be qualified for being translated from a terrestrial to a celestial Paradise. But that this Tree was designed only for repairing bodily Decays is surely too low a Notion of it : For as the Infection of the Tree of Knowledge extended to the Soul, the sanative Virtue of the Tree of Life, its Opposite, must have been designed to have reached thither likewise ; so that the one was as salutary at least as the other was mortiferous, whatever more so ; for, the Tree of Life seems to have been capable of conferring Immortality even after eating of the Tree of Knowledge, *Gen. iii. 22.* The Nature of it may perhaps be farther explained hereafter, when I come to consider its Antitype, the Evangelical Tree of Life, from which alone any farther Light can be reflected upon it.

But whatever the Nature of it was, our first Parents, we may suppose, growing secure in their Innocence, and neglecting to improve and cultivate their Faculties, began by Degrees to be impair'd in them ; and disregarding to renew and invigorate them by having Recourse to the Tree of Life, (which it is plain from *Gen. iii. 22.* they never tasted of) they chose rather to gratify and indulge their Appetites by eating of other Fruit more inviting to the Eye ; which likewise proving delicious to the Palate, they gradually grew wanton in their Plenty and abused the Bounty of Heaven to that Degree, that at length the Tempter found them ripe
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for his Purpose, and was permitted to practise his Wiles upon them ; which yet, we cannot suppose, would have been permitted him ; or else, without admitting that, they would have been enabled to withstand the Assault, had they not previously to this behaved in some manner or other displeasing to GOD, whereby he was provoked to withdraw his Grace and Protection from them. Thus the superior Powers of the Soul being impair'd by the Faculties of Sense, the Plenty of our first Parents became a Snare to them, and an Occasion of Sin ; which by the by is an undeniable Proof of the Expediency and Wisdom of a Law to lay a Restraint upon their Appetites, and shews with how little Reason the Inhibition to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is cavill'd at.

I do not see any ill Consequences this Opinion is chargeable with ; on the contrary, the Permission of the Fall seems most capable of a Solution on this Supposition ; for, the Attributes of God may be better vindicated, and the great Guilt and Heinousness of *Adam's* Transgression is more conceivable by supposing it, as is most natural, to have been contracted gradually, and introduced by a Train of preceding Follies, Levities, and Slights of divine Admonitions.

The Reader may have observed, that the Continuance of our first Parents in Paradise is here supposed to have been much longer than is generally imagined ; and therefore I remark in the next Place,

That the crouding of so many Things within the Compass of one Day (which is all the Time allowed by some) looks more like so many imaginary Scenes or theatrical Representations than real Transactions. ‘ For
 ‘ when we read of *Adam*, in the same Day
 ‘ that he was created (and that was not till
 ‘ GOD had made every Beast of the Field)
 ‘ having a Garden planted for him, removing
 ‘ into it, and as we may well suppose, walking
 ‘ about and taking some Survey of it; receiving from GOD the Prohibition of eating of
 ‘ the Tree of Knowledge, and thereupon ratifying the first great Covenant with him.’
 After that, having all the Creatures assembled before him, making some Enquiry into the Nature of each Kind, and imposing upon them proper Names, a Work of Time!— ‘ Then
 ‘ falling into a deep Sleep,—his Wife taken
 ‘ out of his Side, and with some Formality, to
 ‘ be sure, received by him from the Hand of
 ‘ GOD. When we read of all these Things,
 ‘ I say, we cannot but think, that some Time
 ‘ must have been taken up in the doing of
 ‘ them. And therefore to suppose after this,
 ‘ that in the Close of the same Day, the Woman wander’d from her Husband, met
 ‘ with the Serpent, enter’d into a Parley with
 ‘ him, was overcome by his Insinuations, did
 ‘ eat of the forbidden Fruit, did prevail with
 ‘ her Husband to do the same, and thereupon
 ‘ perceiving themselves naked, both did instantly fall to work, and make themselves
 ‘ Aprons.

the paradisiacal State. 21

‘Aprons.—To suppose, that in the same Evening, God comes down, summons the Criminals before him, hears their Excuses, decrees their Punishments, drives them out of Paradise, and places Cherubims to guard all Avenues against their Return.—This is crowding too long a Series of Business into too short a Compass of Time, and thereby giving an Handle to Infidelity, when there is no manner of Occasion for it.’ *

Nor does the Space of eight or ten Days, allowed by others for *Adam’s* Continuance in Paradise, much mend the Matter. Indeed this Opinion seems to be the most groundless of the two. The Reason why the paradisiacal State is supposed to have been but of one Day’s Duration is, because they who thought so, imagined *Adam* must not have had Knowledge of his Wife in Paradise; either groundlessly believing it inconsistent with that State of Innocence, or supposing he had known her, she must then have conceived and borne Issue in Consequence of that Knowledge, and of the Blessing pronounced, *be fruitful and multiply*, Gen. i. 28. which Issue would not then have been conceived in Sin; as we must maintain all *Adam’s* Children were, to avoid the Consequences of the contrary Opinion. But if we allow them to have continued in Paradise for such a Number of Days, we cannot well avoid supposing, that they had Knowledge of each other, as indeed the anti-

* *Stackhouse History of the Bible. Vol. 1. P. 39.*

22 Duration of the paradisiacal

ent Jews conclude they had, in Obedience to the Command above-mention'd, *be fruitful and multiply*; and therefore we may as well suppose they continued there near seven Months: And this, indeed, seems to have been the Case. *Adam* knew his Wife, and she conceived; but some Time before the Term of her Pregnancy was fulfill'd, she was tempted to eat of the forbidden Fruit: And perhaps the Condition she was in might have the more excited her † Longing for it; when *she saw that the Tree was good for Food, and that it was a Desire to the Eyes* (as it is in the Margin of our Bibles) *and a Tree MOST DESIRABLE to make one wise, (which is the full Import of the Participle בְּחֵמָה NeChE MaD. Gen. iii. 6.)* than which what can be a stronger Description of a Woman in a longing Condition?

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† Tho' I say above, that *Eve's* Pregnancy might have contributed to excite her Longing to taste of the forbidden Fruit; yet I will not pretend to maintain, that it proceeds from any original Constitution of Nature, that pregnant Women are more subject to Longings than others. I am rather inclined to believe, that in *Eve* it was occasioned by the Indulgence of her Appetite in eating immoderately of other Fruits; which irregular Passion growing upon her with her Pregnancy, became daily more and more craving, till at length it was heighten'd to that Degree, that she fell an easy Prey to the Tempter, in transgressing the Limits prescribed by God.

If this Account be allowed of, we here find the Origin of those Longings which Women with Child are so liable to; which are so extravagantly eager and ungovernable, and likewise oftentimes so strange and whimsical, that Naturalists are at a Loss how to account for them. What was at first accidental to Pregnancy, became by Degrees interwoven with it, and makes Part of the Curse entail'd upon the Woman, having been derived down from *Eve* to her Daughters, ever since.

However, eat she did : And the Dreadfulness of the Sentence denounced against her, the Horror of Mind excited in her by the Sense of her Guilt, and her Regret for the Loss of Paradise, threw her into such a Consternation as occasion'd an Abortion ; all which Causes together must be allowed to have been more than sufficient to produce such an Effect in *Eve*, since much less occasion every Day the like in her Daughters : And as much seems to be implied in her Sentence.—*I will greatly multiply thy Sorrow, and thy Conception*, Gen. iii. 16. *I will greatly multiply thy Conception*,—That is, thou shalt conceive much oftner than otherwise had been necessary, by reason of the frequent Miscarriages to which thou shalt be liable. It is, therefore, natural to suppose, that this Sentence immediately took Place, and hath continued as a Part of the Woman's Curse ever since.

And thus we have prolong'd the Time of our first Parents Continuance in Paradise to such a Length as seems more worthy of God, as well as more agreeable to Reason. But we cannot extend it farther, because of the Consequences of supposing *Eve* to have had Time to bear Issue in Paradise : Besides, the Time here allotted is sufficient to answer all the Ends of their continuing there that we know of, since it allows a reasonable Space for every Transaction recorded in the History.

Moreover, this Hypothesis is particularly
C 4 serviceable

24 *Objections answer'd*

servicable for the removing of some Difficulties and Objections which have been started, and which have their Foundation merely in the confined Light in which Men have been accusom'd to view this Matter, and the narrow Limits allow'd to this important Period.

The Author of Christianity as old as the Creation *ridicules Moses* for representing 'Adam' as giving Names to the Creatures as soon as 'he was created, *p. 228. 8vo. Ed.* and *Eve* likewise, as entertaining a Conference with the 'Serpent, even before Consent had given any 'Meaning to Sounds, *p. 349.* and seems to 'imagine, that the Author of the Book of *Genesis*, when he could be guilty of such an 'absurd Relation, must have thought, that 'Words had Ideas naturally fixt to them, and 'not by Consent: And asks how we can otherwise account for this Supposition?

But whence doth it appear, that *Moses* doth suppose God to have brought the Creatures to *Adam* to be named by him, as soon as he was created? Indeed, if that had been the Case, nothing hinders us from believing, that it was in the Power of the great Creator to have endowed Man at the very Instant of his Creation with such a clear intuitive Knowledge, and to have furnished his Mind with so plentiful a Stock of Ideas; and likewise with the Power of expressing them, and conversing intelligibly with others, as would have been abundantly sufficient for this Purpose. But there is no
Neces-

on the foregoing Hypothesis. 25

Necessity for supposing any extraordinary Provision in the Case.

It seems, indeed, more natural to conceive, that Man did not at once start into Being, having his Mind ready furnish'd with these and all other Qualifications and Accomplishments that are acquired by Men of mature Age, in the ordinary Way of Experience and Application; but that God in the Creation of the first Man, allowing for the peculiar Circumstances he was created in, proceeded according to the Analogy of Nature established and preserved by him ever since: For tho' he was not brought into the World like an Infant, but in full Maturity of Reason, as well as bodily Strength and Stature; yet it is not easy to conceive what Knowledge he could immediately have of the Application of either the one, or the other.

His Mind did not open all at once; but its Faculties awoke, and its Capacities were enlarged by Degrees: And as the Senses are the only Inletts of our Ideas, his Mind was this way furnish'd with them, by Means of its own reflex Acts. His reasoning Powers, however excellent, were not to be brought forth, improved, and perfected but by Exercise and Application, being form'd *unto Knowledge*, as the Apostle intimates, *Col. iii. 10: εις επιγνωσιν, i. e. unto the gradual Attainment*, but not in the actual Possession of it. His Mind being competently furnish'd

nish'd by this means, (which in a State of Maturity and Perfection it soon might be,) God Almighty, in order to his expressing the Conceptions of it, instructed him in the Use of Language ; which, I am satisfi'd, was originally the Gift of GOD, that it is not in Man by Nature, and that no Man, or Number of Men, could ever have acquired it of themselves, otherwise than as they had learnt it from others : For we find, that those who are born deaf are likewise constantly dumb ; and History informs us of Experiments that have been tried on Children, by secluding them from all human Converse from their Infancy, in order to find out what the Language of Nature was, which in those Instances proved to have no Language at all.

This Author is, therefore, as far mistaken in supposing Language to have been at first instituted by Consent, as he would persuade us *Moses* was, when he makes him imagine, that Words had Ideas naturally affix'd to them. *Adam* being competently stock'd with Ideas, and instructed in Language, we may suppose, was thereupon advanced into Paradise : For on his being placed there, GOD, we are told, made a Covenant with him. Now it is not to be conceived, that GOD would make a Covenant with him, before he could sufficiently understand the Nature of it, any more than that he had not sufficient Abilities and Assistance to perform it : But a competent Degree of Knowledge, as well as Skill in Language, being necessary

on the foregoing Hypothesis. 27

cessary to understand the Terms of any Covenant, it is probable, that for these Purposes some considerable Time intervened, between *Adam's* Creation and Advancement into Paradise.

And this Supposition best agrees with the Scripture Account, which informs us, that after the Formation of Man, *the Lord God planted a Garden eastward in Eden, and that there*, it being first prepared for his Reception, *he put the Man whom he had form'd*, Gen. ii. 8. Here it was that *Adam*, by Nature mortal, had the Privilege of Immortality conferr'd upon him, on performing the Conditions of it; was admitted to a more intimate Intercourse with his Maker, and was vouchsafed the divine Assistance for the enlightening of his Understanding, and maintaining the due Regulation of his Will and Affections, as far as was necessary for the Preservation of his Innocence, and the gradual Improvement of his Faculties; in which he had begun to make considerable Proficiency, as appears from his being endow'd with the Gift of Prophecy relating to *Eve* and the Marriage State, Gen. ii. 23, 24. and likewise from this Business of naming the Creatures: For tho' it should not be granted, that this necessarily implies an intimate Knowledge of their Natures, as some learned Men think; yet it shews at least, that he was not an unattentive Observer of their outward Qualities, to which he adapted their
Names

Names having first been taught the Names of those several Qualities by GOD.

And thus this Affair may be accounted for in a natural Way, and clear'd from those Absurdities which this Author would fix upon it, even on his own Supposition, 'that the first Pair came into the World in every Sense naked, with regard to their Minds as well as Bodies.' And *Eve's* Conference with the Serpent, having the same Objection made against it, admits of the same Vindication: But this will come to be consider'd more particularly in another Place.

I now proceed to consider another of this Author's Objections, which is easily solved on this Hypothesis, tho' scarcely on any other. The Objection is, 'That God made unto *Adam* and *Eve* Coats of the Skins of Beasts newly created in Pairs;' wherein is insinuated, that as there must at least a Pair of Beasts have been slain for the making of these Coats, one whole Species would be therein destroy'd and lost, almost as soon as made, unless GOD suppli'd this Loss by a second Creation of them. Now, supposing there was but one Pair of a Kind made, as very probably was the Case, with all as well as the human Race; yet there are several Species of Animals that might have propagated and supplied their Kind, from the Creation to the supposed Time of our first Parents Expulsion out of Paradise. To instance in the Sheep, whose Skins probably were those made use of, as being the warmest

est and in that respect the most suitable for Cloathing of any other ; this likewise being the Creature most usually slain in Sacrifice, as probably the Beasts here mentioned were slain for that Purpose in Atonement of our first Parents Sin. Now this Animal, which goes not quite five Months with Young, and many of which bring Twins, might have propagated its Kind within this supposed Period, and suckled them likewise till they were fit to be wean'd ; after which the original Pair might have been slain for the Purposes abovemention'd.

It is Time now to proceed to a Conclusion of this Character of Man in his first Estate : He was upright, but liable to fall ; and tho' made in the divine Image and Similitude, yet ~~we~~ must allow, that the Copy fell infinitely short of the Original ; and therefore might well admit of the Limitations and Imperfections, to which, according to the above Supposition, and the necessary Laws of Creatures, it was liable. Man even in his present fallen State is call'd *the Image of God*, 1 Cor. xi. 7. and is said *to be made in his Similitude*, James iii. 9. tho' much defaced, yet still retaining some of the divine Lineaments ; as an abused Picture is still the Picture of the Person it was drawn for, as long as the principal Lines and Features of his Face may be traced in it.

But to suppose, with a late Writer, * that Mankind at present retains the divine Image
in

*Taylor, in his Scripture-Doctrine of Original Sin. p. 168. & Sequ.

in as eminent a Degree as our first Parents before the Fall, and that our present Powers to discharge our Duty are equal to his original Powers and Perfections, is an injurious Representation of the divine Workmanship in the original Formation of Man, and contrary to his Dispensations ever since, and may be proved to be so from his own Principles.

‘ For if every Man’s Powers are proportion’d to the Duty requir’d of him,’ as he himself allows and argues in his *Supplement*, §. 4; then *Adam*’s Powers must have been superior to those of his Posterity; because, to use his own Expression, *ib.* p. 125. ‘ *Adam* in his innocent State was under the Rigour of Law, which, as this Author conceives, promised neither Aid against Temptation, nor Pardon when he was overcome by it.’ The first Covenant made with him was establish’d upon Terms of perfect unfinning Obedience; This do and live, transgress and die: ‘ Notwithstanding, *Adam* had sufficient Powers to do what God herein required of him, and he required of him no more than what he had sufficient Power to do,’ p. 64. But I suppose he will not say, that Mankind now have sufficient Powers to fulfill the Terms of such a Covenant; tho’ it is not to be doubted, but that they have sufficient at present for what is at present required of them: Neither can there be a more evident Proof of any Truth than of this, that *Adam*’s Powers were greatly impair’d by the Fall, and that he communicated the same feeble

ble Nature to his Posterity; because for this very Reason it was, *viz.* in pure Condescension to his and their Weakness and Inability, that God was pleased to make another Covenant with them upon easier Terms, and such as were more adequate to this their degenerate State.

If it be said, that the *Jews* were placed under a Law equally rigorous, with that at first given to *Adam*, even the same Law renew'd, tho' their Powers to perform it were not greater than those of other People.—To this it may be answer'd, that therefore as none of them ever lived, ever were saved by it, so neither was it intended for that Purpose; but only to convince them of this their Inability, and of the Difference between the two Covenants; and so to serve as a Schoolmaster to bring them to Christ: And it was only in virtue of the second Covenant in his Blood (to which the Law had respect as well as to the first Covenant, and which was typified by the Law) that they were to expect Salvation.

Adam, therefore, was an imperfect Image of his Maker; his Sons much more so: Would we see a perfect and exact Resemblance of HIM? we have it in his only begotten Son: *He, and He alone is the express Image of his Person*, Heb. i. 3. *for in him dwelleth all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily*, Col. ii. 9. As possibly the truest Knowledge of the Attributes of God may be collected and inferr'd
from

32 *Adam and Christ compared*

from the Life and Character of our Saviour, so the same divine Clue may, perhaps, be the best Help to lead us to and illustrate the original State of Man, and enable us to form a right Idea of the Perfection which he was capable of attaining, had he continued in his Innocence.

And this seems to be not obscurely hinted in Scripture, where *Adam* is said to be *the Figure or Type of him that was to come*, Rom. v. 14; and 1 Cor. xv. 45. they are expressly call'd *the first and last Adam*. Whence may be inferr'd,—not that they were both endow'd with equal Perfections—far from it; for the Type is ever inferior to the Antitype—but that the Man, Christ Jesus, having successfully undergone the Probation, and perform'd that perfect Obedience, which it was the capital Crime of the other to have fail'd in, has thereby exhibited and characterized the Attainments which human Nature was capable of, had it, in the Person of *Adam*, gone thro' its Tryal with equal Success, and proceeded from Strength to Strength, still improving in Virtue during the whole Term of his Continuance in the terrestrial Paradise, till at length he should be received into a celestial one; which would be as soon as he should render himself qualified for it. This gradual Proficiency towards Perfection and a Translation to a heavenly Immortality, as the Reward of it, is by Bishop *Bull* shewn to have been the Catholic Doctrine of the Primitive Church, by
numerous

Happiness of the primitive State 33

numerous Citations out of the antient Fathers in Proof of this Truth. *

So happy was Man in his first State, could he but have kept it! created in perfect Innocence and Purity of Mind, with a just Harmony and Regularity of all his Faculties; made Head and Lord of a World, in which every Thing was very good; wherein there was no Evil of any kind, natural or moral, and where no Evil could enter but through his own Fault—where all Things were form'd to give him Delight, and nothing to grieve or incommode him; enjoying a full Flow of Health and Vigour, the Air pure and serene, the Seasons temperate and regular, and the Earth pleasant, wholesome and fruitful; in the most delightful Spot of which he was placed by his Maker, where nothing was wanting to complete his Happiness.

Nor was this Felicity intended for the first happy Pair only: It was to be continued and perpetuated to their Posterity, who after innumerable Ages and Successions, were, in their Courses, sooner or later, in Proportion to the Quickness of their Growth to Perfection, to be taken up to a heavenly Paradise, of which the earthly was but a Type.

This is what I thought proper, in Prosecution of my principal Design, to observe on the State of Man before the Fall. I now proceed to consider the Fall itself and its Consequences.

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C H A P.

* See Bishop *Bu't's* State of Man before the Fall.

CHAP. II.

*Of the Fall, the Consequences, and
Permission of it : Wherein the
principal Difficulties relating to
these Subjects are attempted to
be removed.*

GR E A T Pains have been taken to expose the Account given by *Moses* of the Fall of our first Parents. As the History is short, it is not without it's Difficulties, for the solving which several Methods of have been offer'd by learned Men. That which seems the most satisfactory and unexceptionable, and best to answer the Design of the Whole is as follows.

GOD Almighty, as we have Ground to believe from several Circumstances of this Story, had vouchsafed to our first Parents in Paradise frequent Manifestations of his Glory, wherein he was attended with a Retinue of Angels which always made a Part of the divine *Shecinah*. Of these Angels there were principally two Orders, *Cherubim* and *Seraphim*; which, as we learn from other Places of Scripture, appear'd in the Forms of certain Animals; the *Cherubim* with Faces resembling those

Man's Fall accounted for. 35

those of Oxen, as is inferr'd from *Ezek.* i. 10. x. 14. compared; the *Seraphim* assuming the Likeness of the most eminent Sort of winged Serpents. That there were Serpents of this kind we are informed both by sacred † and profane Authors: But before they were degraded from their original Excellence by the Curse inflicted upon them, they may well be supposed to have been, both for their outward Lustre, and inward Sagacity, not only greatly superior to what they are at present, but perhaps the Chief and the most Glorious of the whole brute Creation, and therefore the more proper Symbol for the celestial Inhabitants to exhibit themselves by.

Accordingly the same Name is common to both; the Word שֶׁרָפָה *SaRaPH*, and in the plural Number *SeRaPHim*, being used in Scripture to denote, as well a fiery flying Serpent, *i. e.* shining like Fire when he flies, as an Angel of this Order. ||

As these, the Seraphim especially, || *were all ministering Spirits sent forth to minister for the Heirs of Salvation.* Heb. i. 14. they probably were often dispatch'd on that Errand to our first Parents in Paradise, and *Eve* might have frequently held familiar Converse with them under the fore-mentioned Appearances.

The apostate Angel perceiving this, the better to cover his Deceit, enters the Body

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of

† See *Isa.* xiv. 29. xxx. 6.

|| See Archbishop *Tennison's* Discourse on Idolatry, Ch. xiv.

of one of these Serpents. Indeed the Name which the Serpent is call'd by in *Gen. iii.* is not *SaRaPH*, but נָחָשׁ *NaCHaSH**; which ever is Synonymous to it, as appears from *Numb. xxi. 8, 9*, where they are convertibly used for each other. It is therefore most probable, that it was a Serpent of this very kind which *Satan* made use of, the natural Subtily of the Creature disposing him to be the fitter Instrument for his Design; and thus personating one of the glorious *Seraphim*, *he transforms himself into an Angel of Light*; which the Scripture expressly assures us he could do. *2 Cor. xi. 14.* and therefore probably did do it on this Occasion, as we know not any more likely. And the Context, if consider'd, will confirm us in this Persuasion. For *St Paul* is here cautioning the *Corinthians* against the Seduction of *false Apostles, deceitful Workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ*. And no marvel, says he, *for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light*. Therefore it is no great Thing, if his Ministers also be transformed as the Ministers of Righteousness. And these false Teachers he in the 3d verse of this Chap. compares to the Serpent beguiling *Eve thro' his Subtily*; so that if the one Part of the Context be explained by the other, this and none other is the Occasion on which *Satan* is said to have

* In the *Welsh* Translation it is render'd by *Sarph*, which is evidently a Contraction of *Saraph*.

have transformed himself into an Angel of Light. v. 14.

Hence it is easy to conceive how *Eve* might entertain familiar Discourse with the Serpent without the least Surprize or Suspicion of Deceit, as she might take him for a *Seraph* come, as usual, on a friendly Visit to her.

And we may be sure he on his part was not wanting to confirm her in this Persuasion, pretending, we may suppose, a Commission from GOD to explain the Command relating to the Tree of Knowledge. And therefore he thus accosts her. *Yea hath GOD said, ye shall not eat of every Tree of the Garden?* Gen. iii. 1. *q. d.* ‘How is it that you understand this Matter? Do you apprehend, that GOD means to lay any Restraint upon your Liberty, or that he forbids you the Use of one Tree of the Garden any more than another?’ We are sensible, *says Eve*, that we are allowed the Privilege of eating freely of all the Trees of the Garden, That one only excepted, which grows here in the midst of it, and which he hath peremptorily forbidden us so much as to touch, under the Denunciation of Death, if we transgress,—‘Now that is your Mistake, replies the Deceiver: ‘You must have been under some great Misapprehension concerning this Matter: Your Reason was but beginning to dawn, when you imagined GOD gave you this Command, whereby perhaps you were not fully capable

‘of understanding him. Be that as it will,
 ‘there is no such Penalty annexed as you ima-
 ‘gine: Take my Word for it you shall not
 ‘die. GOD never intended to prohibit the
 ‘Eating of this Fruit of all others: For is
 ‘not this the Tree of Knowledge? Whence
 ‘you may conclude from the Nature of it,
 ‘that GOD designs it for your Use, who is
 ‘too good, and too well knows the Virtue of
 ‘it, to restrain you from it. For this is so
 ‘surprizingly great and efficacious, that it
 ‘will enlighten your Understanding to that
 ‘Degree as to raise you to an Equality in a
 ‘Manner with GOD himself, in the Know-
 ‘ledge of Good and Evil.’

By this impudent and specious Lye was the Credulity of our Parent *Eve* imposed upon; whence we see how just that Character is which our Saviour gives us of the grand Deceiver. *Jo. viii. 44. That there is no Truth in him, but that he is a Lyar and the Father of Lyes.* And from hence, by the Way, it appears, if we may be allowed to interpret Scripture by Scripture, that the Devil was principally concerned in this Affair, and made use of the Serpent as his Instrument; for he is here called not only *a Lyar, but a Murderer from the Beginning*; and in *Rev. xii. 9. xx. 2. the Dragon, that old Serpent*, is expressly called and said to be *the Devil and Satan.*

To return.

This plausible Story of the pretended Vir-
 tue

accounted for and illustrated. 39

tue of the Tree, to which her own longing Desire excited by the Fairness of its Fruit inclin'd her to lend a willing Ear, prevailed at length upon *Eve* to try the Experiment. And her great Crime consisted in this—*In believing any Creature, how great or holy soever she might think him to be, contrary to the express Command of GOD himself.* Tho' a real Angel from Heaven had told her any Thing that contradicted divine Authority, natural Religion, natural Reason should have dictated to her, with *St Paul, Gal. i. 8.* to pronounce him accursed, and to detest him accordingly.

A learned Friend hath suggested to me another Case in Scripture parallel to that of *Eve*, which will afford a lively Illustration of her Transgression. The Case is that of the Man of GOD, who was sent to prophesy against the Altar at *Bethel.* *1 Kings xiii.* and who was peremptorily charged by GOD neither to eat nor drink at *Bethel*, when he executed his Commission there: And this he had so strict a Regard to, that he declined *Jeroboam's* Invitation to refresh himself at his House, tho' back'd with the Promise of a considerable Reward. *If thou wilt give me half thine House,* says he to him, *I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat Bread nor drink Water in this Place.* For so it was charged me by the Word of the Lord, saying, *Eat no Bread, nor drink Water, nor turn again by the same Way that thou camest.* v. 8, 9. Never-

vertheless, after he had withstood this Temptation, and set out from the Place on his Journey homewards, an old Prophet pretending Orders from an Angel to bring him back to his House, and to make him eat and drink, prevailed with him to return merely by this Stratagem; for he could have no Prospect of being entertained or rewarded by him as well as he might have been by *Jeroboam*. And this sinful Compliance he atoned for with his Life.—Had he acted as he ought to have done herein, having received the Command from GOD, he should not have looked upon himself as discharged from it by any Authority inferior to that which enjoyn'd it. And thus ought *Eve* to have reason'd with herself likewise. But the one listen'd to the Suggestions of the old Serpent personating one of the holy Angels, and the other to an old Prophet pretending a Commission from an Angel; wherein the Text expressly *says, he lied unto him* v. 18. as the Devil his Father had done before him in the former Case. And as both the one and the other yielded to these wicked Suggestions to gratify their Appetites in direct Contradiction to the positive Command of GOD, they were both involved in the same Condemnation, and Death was the Wages of the Sin of both the one and the other.

Having observed thus much concerning the Fall, the Consequences of it present themselves next to our Consideration.

A late Author, in a Treatise * concerning this Subject, seems to wish 'that the Doctrine of original Sin might be accounted for, in a manner consistent with the divine Attributes, by the original Law of Propagation only, without the Supposition of a federal Head; which he has Recourse to because he thought it could not be accounted for in the former Way; but supposing it could, he plainly enough intimates his Opinion, that it would be the most eligible and satisfactory of all others.'

This is what the Reader will here find attempted; which if it should be attended with Success, will serve to clear this Doctrine from the odious and terrible Consequences charged upon it by the above-mentioned Author's † Adversary, and might be the happy Means of reconciling all Differences in Opinion concerning this difficult and long controverted Point.

The plain Account of the Effects of our first Parents Transgression is this--that thereby they lost their native Innocence and Integrity--were degraded from their happy Situation in Paradise--forfeited the Favour of God, and their Title to the Tree of Life and Immortality--and render'd themselves obnoxious to Miseries and Evils of several Kinds. The Woman was condemn'd to a Multiplicity of Sorrows in her Pregnancy and Delivery, the
Man

* *Ruin and Recovery of Mankind*, p. 101.

† *Taylor's Scripture Doctrine of original Sin*.

Man to Labour and Drudgery ; and both of them to Death, Temporal, Spiritual, and Eternal.

Moreover, the wise Creator, in the original Constitution of Things, had establish'd such a necessary Connection between the several Parts of the Creation and each other, that when the Harmony which subsisted throughout was broke but in one Part, the Whole was thrown into Discord and Disorder. Thus the natural and moral World were so interwoven together, that no Change could be made in the one, but the other shared its Fate, and moral Evil being introduced into the World, drew after it a Train of natural Evils likewise. *The whole Creation*, as *St. Paul* testifies, *Rom. viii. 20.* was subjected to the sad Effects of *Adam's Sin*. That the brute Part of it was affected thereby, is implied in the Serpent's Curse ; *Cursed art thou above all Cattle, and above every Beast of the Field*, *Gen. iii. 14.* Whence it is evident, that his Fellow-Brutes were in some measure involved in his Sentence, and accursed for his Sake ; that as he from being the Head of them, was degraded to the lowest Degree of Infamy, and the vilest Condition of all others, so they in like manner greatly degenerated from their first State, and particularly seem to have lost their original Mildness, and to have contracted a Savageness, which at first was not natural to them ; whereby Man incurr'd another Loss, *viz.* his Sovereignty over the Creatures.

The Brute Creation being joyn'd in the
same

Adam's Transgression. 43

same System with Man, must necessarily, in Virtue of the *Law of Connection* above-mention'd, be in some Degree obnoxious to the Inconveniencies of his Fate; but as they had no proper Demerit of their own, so the Curse seems to have fallen the lighter upon them, being observed to act more agreeably to their Natures, and more regularly to answer the End of their Creation.

Nor was even the inanimate World so insensible, as not to sympathize in the general Disaster; *for it groaneth and travaileth in Pain together until now*, Rom. viii. 22. The very Ground was laid under a Curse for the Sake of Man; its former Fertility was greatly impair'd, the Temperature of the Air was changed; the Seasons became irregular, and the Weather unfavourable; and the whole Face of Nature was very much alter'd for the worse.

Nor did the Evil stop here. The Contagion spread and infected Posterity; and the whole Race of Mankind, which were then in the Loyns of their common Parent, partook more or less of his Sin, both in the Corruption and Guilt of it. Nor ought it to be so much wonder'd at, notwithstanding it is by some thought so great a Difficulty, that his own Flesh and Blood, who sprang from his Loyns, and derived their Being and Nature from him, should with that Nature receive the Corruption which was inseparable from it, when the other Parts of the Creation that did
not

44 *Doctrine of Original Sin*

not bear so near a Relation to him, were so remarkably affected thereby. When *Adam's* Sin was the Cause of so much natural Evil, can it be supposed that this Sin was attended with no ill Consequences of the moral Kind—of the same Kind with itself? Why therefore should it be thought incredible, that moral Evil should beget and propagate moral Evil, when it is allow'd natural Evil was begot by it? Indeed it could not be in the Nature of Things; that a Fountain so polluted should send forth pure Streams, or that so corrupt a Tree should bear any other than corrupt Fruit: For *who can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean? not one*, Job: xiv. 4.

But it is thought to bear hard upon the divine Attributes, that *Adam's* Crime should be imputed to his innocent Children yet unborn, and that his latest Posterity must be loaded with the Guilt, as well as Depravity of it: In Justification of which Appointment, let it be consider'd,

1. That as *Adam's* Children could receive no other Nature from him but such as he had to communicate, *viz.* a corrupt one, so it is a Law resulting from the immutable Relation of Things, *That every Degree of Depravity, every the least Deviation from Right and Good, should be attended with proportionable Degrees of Inconvenience to the Subject in which it should be found: Guilt**, or Obnoxiousness

* See an Essay on the Guilt and Defilement of Sin, annex'd to a Treatise

ness to Suffering, or, if you please, Punishment, is included in the very Notion of it; for all Suffering is, either immediately or remotely, the Punishment of Sin. In a word, moral Evil must have physical Evil inseparably annexed to it: Whence it follows, that all who partake of *Adam's* corrupt Nature, must so far forth partake of his Sin, and stand guilty in the Sight of God; so that it is begging the Question to suppose them innocent. †

2. With regard to the Propagation of this original Sin through a Succession of so many Generations to the present Time, let it be consider'd, that this is not altogether to be imputed to *Adam*; but that every one of our intermediate Parents had a Share in it. For he could transfer it only to his immediate Offspring; they to theirs; and so on—each of whom had it in his Power either to increase or diminish the Corruption he received from his immediate Parents. And if every Parent from *Adam* down to this present Time, had used all the Means in his Power, and made due Application of every Portion of Grace offer'd him for that Purpose, in order to the purifying of his Nature, I cannot conceive that
the

Treatise entitled, *The Ruin and Recovery of Mankind*, where the Nature of Guilt is well explain'd.

† *Milton* understood the Force of this Argument, when he represents *Adam* as using it by way of Self-Condernation, in these Words.

——— *Ab! Why should all Mankind
For one Man's Fault thus guiltless be condemn'd?
If guiltless: But from me what can proceed,
But all corrupt?* *Paradise lost. B. 10. V. 822.*

46 *Doctrine of Original Sin*

the original Stain was so very deep, that it might not in so many Generations have been wash'd off so entirely by the Blood of the Redeemer, that there had not been the least Remainder of it left.

The first Sin consider'd in its Consequences, was undoubtedly very great and heinous. And its Heinousness seems to have been aggravated by this—That it was the *first*, and gave Birth to all other Sin and Evil: For it is observable, that God hath always expressed his Indignation in a more severe and extraordinary manner against the first Instances of notorious and presumptuous Sins, than against any succeeding Commissions of them; as in *Cain*, *Corab*, *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, and *Simon Magus*. And hence likewise, the Sin of *Adam* being the first Sin of all, might become so much *the more exceeding sinful*; insomuch, that not only Mankind, but all Nature underwent a considerable Change for the worse; but more especially as God Almighty immediately hereupon was obliged to change the Scheme of his Conduct towards Mankind, in entering into a new Covenant with them of a quite different Nature from the former, and sending his only begotten Son to seal it with his Blood. This was so important a Change, that nothing but the utmost Necessity could be the Cause of it. And if *Adam's* Sin were considered in this View, I am persuaded it could not, as it too often is, be so lightly esteemed.

On the other hand, if we consider the Act
itself

itself abstracted from every Thing but what was personal to *Adam*, it were easy to recount several extenuating Circumstances with which it was attended, even in the View above given of it. And in this respect, I am apt to think, there have been as great, not to say, greater Offences since committed in the World, and such as, perhaps, convey'd no less Corruption to the Posterity of those who committed them. One I will venture to name, *viz.* the Sin against the Holy Ghost, which, as well as *Adam's* Sin, still too powerfully reigns in the Descendants of those who were guilty of it. For, that the Sin of *Adam*, notwithstanding the sad Effects of it, was an unpardonable Sin, has not been maintain'd by any that I know of; nay, it is scarce doubted, but that he repented, and was actually pardoned for it. So thinks the Author of the Book of *Wisdom*, *That she (Wisdom) preserved the first form'd Father of the World, that was created alone, and brought him out of his Fall,* Chap. x. 1. And *Irenæus* declares no less expressly for the same * Opinion. Now if the Sin of *Adam* was not in it self so very heinous, it admitted of the easier Cure; nor had it at this Day reign'd so much, if at all, in our natural Bodies, had every one done his Part towards the correcting and eradicating of it. The Increase of Wickedness that hath been in the World, hath greatly enhanced the Corruption derived from

* *Adam prior salvatur a Domino, Lib. 3. Cap. 34. vide etiam Capp. 35, 37.*

48. *Doctrine of Original Sin*

from the first Sin, which hath contracted much additional Filth from the polluted Channels through which it hath passed. This is evident from the greater Prevalence of this Depravity of Nature which appears in some Persons, and some Ages and Parts of the World, than in others; and is generally to be ascribed to this Cause, *viz.* to the Wickedness of their proximate Parents, or of a whole Line of profligate Ancestors; while others descended from virtuous Progenitors, inherit their excellent Qualities, and discover the Happiness of their Birth in their *good Nature*.* That we have any Depravity in our Nature, we owe to our first Parents, as the Introducers of it; that each of us hath precisely so much, neither more nor less, to lament, we owe to all our other Progenitors in Conjunction with them, each in Proportion to what he contributed to it, or subtracted from it; but chiefly to our more immediate Parents. But, that original Sin is invariably the same in all, is an idle Dream of the Schoolmen, without Foundation in Nature, Scripture, or Reason. When therefore what we call by this Name is divided between so many, there will but little fall upon *Adam*, and the less, the more Removes we are from him; but none at all can be charged to God's Account. For,

3. The Consideration of his Attributes will not suffer us to think that any Man was ever damned

* See *Balguy's* second Letter to a Deist, p. 18. where he reasons well to this Purpose.

damned merely for original Sin, otherwise than as he made it his own, by his own Act and Deed, *i. e.* by a virtual Approbation of it, ratifying it to himself, and confirming himself in it by his actual Transgressions unrepented of. For thus he in Effect signs and seals it as he would a Deed in Law; whereby he becomes most justly liable to the Penalties of it himself; and moreover conveys it down entire, or perhaps double to his Posterity, if he has any. As for all others from the beginning of the World, who either died in their Infancy, before they came to the Knowledge of Good or Evil, or who becoming moral Agents, lived up to the Light and Knowledge they had of their Duty, and in their several Circumstances made the best use of the Helps they had to become wiser and better; of all such, I think, there ought no Doubt to be made, but that they obtain Salvation through the Merits of the Mediator. For as the Promise of a Redeemer was made immediately after the Fall, even before the Sentence of Condemnation was pass'd upon our first Parents, the Virtue of our Saviour's Death commenced immediately then, and became applicable to all who have, or shall, have lived from that Time to the End of the World; as well by way of Retrospect or Anticipation to those who lived before it happen'd, as to those who were, or shall be born afterwards, and that without Respect of Persons. For as the Promise was made to *Adam*, all his Sons have an equal Title to it,

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provided

50 *Doctrine of Original Sin*

provided they be duly qualified to partake of the Benefits of it, *Jesus Christ being the same, yesterday, to day, and for ever*, Heb. xiii. 8. *

In short, if we consider Man in his natural State after the Fall, his Condition is most deplorable: We are *all Children of Wrath* under the Sentence of Condemnation, and there cannot be too melancholy a Picture drawn of us. But then this is a State which never actually subsisted any otherwise than as Men by their own Fault relapsed into it, converting, if I may so say, original, into actual Sin; since our blessed Saviour, to use the Words of the Author of the *Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin*, immediately upon *Adam's Transgression*, 'stept in and caught 'up his falling,' or rather fallen,' Creature in 'his Arms,' and provided a Remedy for original as well as actual Sin, ready to be applied to all proper Objects, as their Needs required, and before it was possible for any one to be a Sufferer by it.

Add to this, that original Sin is not invincible in any one; for the Grace of God is sufficient for us all, in order to overcome all our Sins whatsoever; nor does he deny his Grace to any that render themselves fit Objects of it.

Mr. T. indeed objects against this Doctrine, as some have taught it in quite too rigid a Sense, '† That according to that Scheme, a corrupt 'Na-

* See Rom. iii. 25. Heb. ix. 15, 25, &c. and Grot. de Satisfactione, Cap. 6. † Taylor's Scripture Doctrine, p. 167.

‘ Nature will, to the End of the World, remain in every Man so long as he liveth; and consequently, that the Reformation of Mankind must be impracticable with regard to the impure Spring of all Wickedness—that Men are in no Capacity of using the Means of Amendment, and therefore under no Obligation to attempt the Reformation of the World—And that no Man, except *Adam*, is blameable for the Wickedness that is in it, as it proceeds from a Cause which we cannot, and GOD will not, totally remove in this Life.’ But no Part of this Objection lies against this Doctrine, according to the Account here given of it, which quite contrary to what is objected, supposes no such invincible Corruption of Nature, but that the Reformation of Mankind is in every Respect practicable—That every other Man, as well as *Adam*, is accountable for the Wickedness that is in the World—that it proceeds from a Cause that we can, and, as I shall prove, with the divine Assistance, shall totally remove in this Life; and therefore that we are not only obliged, but moreover greatly encouraged, to attempt the Reformation of the World.

If the Doctrine of Original Sin be consider'd in this Light, it is to be hoped, its Adversaries will be better reconciled to it; and that it will not seem such a frightful *Bug-bear*, as the above Author is pleased to call it, that they need be so scared at it, as to run almost

50 *Doctrine of Original Sin*

provided they be duly qualified to partake of the Benefits of it, *Jesus Christ being the same, yesterday, to day, and for ever*, Heb. xiii. 8. *

In short, if we consider Man in his natural State after the Fall, his Condition is most deplorable: We are *all Children of Wrath* under the Sentence of Condemnation, and there cannot be too melancholy a Picture drawn of us. But then this is a State which never actually subsisted any otherwise than as Men by their own Fault relapsed into it, converting, if I may so say, original, into actual Sin; since our blessed Saviour, to use the Words of the Author of the *Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin*, immediately upon *Adam's* Transgression, 'stept in and caught 'up his falling,' or rather fallen, 'Creature in 'his Arms,' and provided a Remedy for original as well as actual Sin, ready to be applied to all proper Objects, as their Needs required, and before it was possible for any one to be a Sufferer by it.

Add to this, that original Sin is not invincible in any one; for the Grace of God is sufficient for us all, in order to overcome all our Sins whatsoever; nor does he deny his Grace to any that render themselves fit Objects of it.

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52 *Doctrine of Original Sin and*

out of *Christendom* to avoid it; as some may be said to have done, by sinking their Christianity so low, as to be but a Degree above Deism. For it appears to be no more than the natural Consequence of *Adam's* Transgression, resulting from an establish'd Law of Propagation; and even this is prevented and removed as far as the Nature of it doth admit, and as is consistent with the Wisdom of God's Government.

If it be ask'd, what Evidence we have of this Law of Propagation, whereby a moral Taint is derived from *Adam* to his Posterity?—I answer, it appears in many similar Cases to be so in Fact. For every Man's Observation may inform him, that there are hereditary Distempers of Mind as well as Body, reigning in certain Families, being too faithfully convey'd down from Parents to Children in a long Line of many Generations. How this Taint is communicated to the Soul, we cannot pretend to say, because we are utterly unacquainted with the Laws of Union of Soul and Body, otherwise than as we may judge of them from their Effects: Whence it appears, that the Soul, in innumerable Instances, is greatly affected by the Habit of the Body.—Nor will the Consequences hold thus in Opposition to Fact, which Mr T. draws from the Consideration, that God is the Author of our Natures; besides, that he is not so in the same manner that he was of *Adam's*, which came immediately, and therefore purely out of his Hands:
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Permission of Evil vindicated 53

But he is the Author of our Natures only mediately and derivatively from our Parents, whose Instrumentality he uses for this Purpose, and of whose Natures we partake; which makes a great Difference between both Cases; so that no Argument can be drawn from the one to the other.

But all that can be said in Justification of the divine Attributes with Regard to the Consequences of the Fall, will signify little if the Fall itself is not to be justified. The Permission of Evil, is that wherein the great Strength of Atheists and Infidels lies, nor shall the Unsuccessfulness of former Attempts discourage my Endeavours to deprive them of it. The Objection which hath been push'd with much Acuteness and Subtility may be stated in few Words, thus, * 'Since God foresaw, that 'Man would sin, how was it consistent with 'Ideal Goodness not to prevent it; when, for 'that Purpose, it was in his Power, either to 'have over-ruled his Liberty; or else, without Prejudice to it, to have afforded him 'such Assurances, as must have effectually preserved him in his Innocence.'

In answer to this, let it be consider'd, that it is the Nature of Creatures to be dependent—that Dependency implies Need of Support—that in the Vouchsafement of this Support, the divine Conduct regulates itself by

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* See Bayle's Dict. Art. *Manichæans*, *Paulicians*, & *alibi passim*, and the Life of Mr Bayle prefix'd to his Dict. by Mr des Maizeaux, p. 102.

54 *The Permission of Evil*

certain Rules and Laws founded on the Natures and Relations of Things, and adjusted according to the utmost Exactness—That these Laws are inviolable ; because the violating of them upon any Account, would argue such Weakness and Variableness as is unworthy of the divine Being, and would be violating the Reasons and Natures of Things—That one of these Laws is, to govern all Creatures according to their Natures—Another, that the Support vouchsafed them, bear a just Proportion to the Need they have of it ; and that it be suited to the State and Nature of its Object—That the Support or Assistance vouchsafed to free Agents, bear a certain *Ratio*, or Proportion to Free-Will, that, in Conjunction with it, it may be sufficient to enable them to preserve their State, and to advance it—That however, it lay no Force upon their Freedom. Whence it follows, that it must necessarily be an inferior Principle of Action to Free-Will, and therefore liable to be overruled by it—and that, if God bestow such a *Ratio* of Grace, as will prove an Over-balance to Free-Will, or suspend it in *Æquilibrio*, it either way destroys its Motion ; which is contrary to the fore-mention'd Laws of his Government.

If therefore these Principles be right, it is not conceivable how God himself, consider'd as a wise Governor of the World, can prevent Man's sinning ; because he is bound by the Laws of his Conduct, not to afford him any

any more than such a Quantity of Grace, as leaves Free-Will to be the more powerful Principle of Action; which if it be opposed to Grace, must necessarily overcome it.

Upon these Principles GOD is sufficiently justified in making such a Creature as Man, as well as in permitting him to sin: For as he cannot make a Creature strictly impeccable; in making Man, as at first He did, he left him no more than the bare Possibility of sinning, the Probability lying on the other Side. For he first endowed him with Freedom of Will, which being balanced with the utmost Exactness between Good and Evil, that was as much as GOD, in Justice, was bound to do, since the Determination of his Happiness and Misery was left entirely in himself. But as GOD moreover threw an additional Weight into the Scale on the Side of Good, this made *it* to preponderate; and therefore actually gave him the first Determination to Good; which is sufficient to justify the Goodness of GOD likewise.

How then, it may be ask'd, was it in the Power of Man to give himself a contrary Determination afterwards? Very easily; even as easily as we often see *well disposed* Persons now adays, whose Inclinations are mostly bent towards Good, yet sometimes to relapse, and even finally to fall away from Grace, whereby the Balance is turn'd to the other Side.

To make it plainer, let us suppose the Mind of Man to resemble a Person holding a Pair

56 *Permission of Evil vindicated.*

of Scales; the one Scale G. inclining to Good; the other E. inclining to Evil: To these two Scales belong two Weights; the one lesser Gr. Grace, always belonging to the Scale G. the other greater L. Liberty, not confined to either Scale; but lodged in the Person's Hand who holds the Balance M. who has it in his Power to put it into that which he thinks fit, and may remove it from the one to the other at Pleasure.

Who now sees not, that tho' the Odds lye on the Side of G. yet that it is entirely in the Power of M. to turn the Balance to which Side he pleases, and that as often as he thinks fit? *Q. E. D.*

This Demonstration is built upon a few such simple and self-evident Principles, that I think it is uncontestable, and gives an easy Solution of that Difficulty, which has so long been the Triumph of Infidels, in which they fortified themselves as their Dernier Resort, and which has so often baffled the Endeavours of the Advocates of Religion to account for it. It fully vindicates the moral Attributes of GOD with regard to the Permission of Evil, which seemed to bear so hard upon them, and obviates all the Objections, as well those of Mr *Bayle* as of others relating to it, so far as I have had Opportunity to examine them. And the Origin of moral Evil being thus accounted for, without making GOD accessary to it, or arrainging any of his Attributes, I need say nothing of physical Evil, that being necessarily connected
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Laws of Grace and Liberty. 57

with, and resulting from moral Evil as I have shewn *page 42.*

I shall here to subjoin the following Corollaries drawn from the foregoing Reasonings.

- Coroll.* I. That every free Agent, at his first setting out in Life, is endowed with a certain Quantity of Liberty.
- II. That this Liberty must, in the Nature of it, have a double Aspect, or be two-fold, *viz.* Liberty to Good, and Liberty to Evil: For if it hath not a Power of determining itself either Way, it is no more Liberty, but Necessity.
- III. That this Liberty, like all other Faculties of the Mind, is capable of being improved or impaired: *i. e.* That his Liberty towards Good will be advanced, or diminished, and *v. v.* towards Evil, in Proportion to the Use he makes of it.
- IV. That every Increase of Liberty to Good is a Diminution of Liberty to Evil; and *v. v.*
- V. That the first, as well as every other subsequent Portion of Grace, is the free Gift of God, and is proportioned to the Quantity of Liberty in the Subject.
- VI. That in the Progress of it, it keeps pace with Liberty, *i. e.* it is increased or diminished in Proportion to the Increase or Diminution of Liberty to Good.
- VII. Because Grace is confined within the Bounds set it by Liberty, the more, Liberty
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ty to Good is increased, the more in Proportion Grace will be increased, and it's Bounds enlarged: And every Diminution of Liberty to Good is a Diminution of Grace, *v. v.* Every Increase of Liberty to Evil is a Diminution of Grace; and every Diminution of Liberty to Evil is an Increase of Grace.

VIII. That by the Increase of Liberty to Good *ad infinitum*, Liberty to Evil will be diminished *ad infinitum*, *i. e.* destroyed and *v. v.* by the Increase of Liberty to Evil *ad infinitum*, Liberty to Good will be destroyed.

IX. Liberty to Good being increased *ad infinitum*, Grace will be increased *ad infinitum* likewise; and *v. v.* Liberty to Evil being increased *ad infinitum*, Grace will be destroyed.

X. Liberty to Evil being intirely destroyed, the Relapse of the Subject, it is destroyed in, to Evil becomes impossible, by the Laws of Grace and Liberty. *E contra*, Grace and Liberty to Good being intirely destroy'd, the Recovery of the Subject it is destroy'd in becomes impossible, without destroying human Liberty, or over-ruling it.

Infer. Hence it is barely possible, that all free Agents may suffer their Liberty to Evil, to gain such a Head as to destroy Grace and Liberty to Good; and in infinite Numbers of them, it is not at all strange if many of them will. On the other Hand there is a Possibi-
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ity, that they may all improve their Liberty to Good, and the Grace given them in Aid of it, to that Degree, as to destroy their Liberty to Evil; and there is the highest Degree of Probability, that the Bulk of them at length will. Because it is most reasonable to suppose, that reasonable Creatures, after the continued Experience of the Benefits of Good, and Inconveniencies of Evil, will at last perceive their true Interest, and act accordingly—that after Vibrating for a Time from one Extreme to the other, the Centre of moral Oscillation * will at length be fix'd. That the two Principles, Liberty to Good, and Grace, acting in Conjunction with each other, will in the End prevail against the single Principle, Liberty to Evil—and that however the Balance may be kept fluctuating for a while, and continued in Suspence, the Scale which has the Advantage of Weight must finally preponderate.

Having demonstratively clear'd the divine Conduct with regard to the Origin of Evil, and Permission of the Fall, I think I have, by Deductions from the same Principles, gone near to demonstrate likewise our future Recovery from it; the finally complete Prevalence of Good over Evil. Nor do I know of any Deficiency in this Reasoning, unless it be said, that the Suggestions of the Devil ought to be consider'd as a Counter-balance to the Assistance of divine Grace: Admitting this there-
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* See Bayle's Dict. Vol. ii. p. 832. b.

60 *Connection of Grace & Liberty.*

fore, it only brings the two Scales nearer to an Equality; for as *He that is with us is stronger than him that is against us*, the Advantage must still lie on the Side of that inclining to Good; so that the Conclusion is still the same.

If these Principles are right, it will be allowed, that they give us clearer and more rational Notions of Grace and Free-will, whereby they will serve to correct those enthusiastical Conceits relating hereto that seem to be reviving among us, and to convince us, that God doth not act arbitrarily, partially, or irresistibly in the Distribution of his Grace, but proceeds according to certain established Laws, whereby the Freedom of Man's Will is always secured. And if the many and long controverted Disputes relating to these Subjects were brought to this Touchstone, they would be speedily adjusted.

Hence likewise it appears, that there is a strict Connection between true Liberty, that is, Liberty to Good, and Christian Grace—that they are inseparable—and that the one cannot subsist in any tolerable Degree without the other: Whence we see how groundless the Pretensions of Infidels are to Liberty—what sort of Liberty that is which they so much pique themselves upon—what Enemies they are to themselves and to it, in disclaiming divine Grace in Aid of it—and how justly the Apostle observes concerning such, that *while they promise Liberty* to others, whom they

they would seduce, *they themselves are the Servants of Corruption.* 2 Pet. ii. 19.

What I have hitherto offer'd is only preparatory to my general Design; which is to shew the final Prevalence of Good over Evil in this State, and that Mankind, before the End of the World, shall recover from all the ill Consequences of the Fall, and be restored to their original Perfection. In proof of this Truth I shall offer the following Considerations, from all which taken together, I hope it will be fully established.

- I. I shall offer some Remarks on the State of the World after the Fall; whence it will appear, that God from the Beginning had the Amendment and Reformation of it in View; and wherein some Account will be given of his Procedure in this respect, with the Reasons of it, as well as of the Causes why the Work of Reformation took Place no sooner, and went on no faster.
- II. I shall shew, that it went on notwithstanding, and that the Dispensations of Providence in the several Periods of the World had a manifest Tendency to this End, and according to the Use made of them were more or less effectual in the Improvement of Mankind, both in their religious and civil Capacities.
- III. I shall shew what the Notions and Expectations of the ancient Jews, Heathens, and Christians were, with regard to the
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62 *Doctrine of Original Sin*

future Restoration and Renovation of the World.

IV. I shall shew, that this Doctrine is agreeable to the Attributes of GOD, the Nature of Man, and Reasons of Things.

V. I shall shew it to be the general Design and Tendency of the Christian Religion to restore Man to his primitive State. And

VI. I shall particularly prove, that he shall be so restored in every Respect, from several Passages in the prophetic Writings of the Old and New Testament, as well as from many other places of Scripture.

And in order to clear the Way, I shall begin with some Remarks on the State of the World in the Ages next after the Fall.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

Containing Remarks on the State of Mankind after the Fall in the Antediluvian World ; whence it will appear, that GOD in all his Dispensations during this Period, had an Eye to their Amendment and Reformation.

THERE are several favourable Circumstances observable in the Sentence pronounced on our first Parents after their Fall. As first, the Promise of a Redeemer even before the Pronunciation of it ; which was a comfortable Ground of Hope for their Support under it, as herein was contain'd a gracious Assurance, that they were not entirely abandon'd to Perdition, but that GOD immediately began to lay Measures for delivering them out of the deplorable Condition, into which they had plunged themselves. And when the Sentence came to be pronounced, it is to be observed, that it is couched in milder Terms than that on the Serpent, or even that on the Earth : For God Almighty does not expressly tell either *Adam* or *Eve*, that they are cursed, lest the Harshness of the Sentence should cast them into Despair, but leaves it to be inferr'd by themselves, as it
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64 *Doctrine of Original Sin*

well might be, from the Earth's being accursed for their Sakes; and his transferring of the Curse in this manner from them to the Earth, was an Act of Clemency, and intimated his Inclination *to release them from it. Moreover, GOD's gracious Intention towards these unhappy Criminals, may be inferr'd from the Relaxation he made in the Execution of the Sentence after it was pronounced: For whereas He had threaten'd, that in the Day they should eat, they should surely die, yet he was pleased to grant them a Reprieve for a long Term of Years, that they might have Time for Repentance and Recovery.

And it is especially worthy our Observation, that this Sentence was so wisely contrived in the Nature of it, as to be an Expedient for removing itself, which is observable with Regard to every Part of it.

Thus the Man's Sentence *to eat his Bread in the Sweat of his Brow*, seems to be the Injunction of a *salutary Penance*, that is, not merely a Punishment, but also a Remedy against the Disorders of various Kinds, which he would be liable to in this his fallen and degenerated State; Labour and Exercise being a necessary Means not only of preserving the *Body* in due Plight, maintaining Health, and prolonging Life, but of promoting the Health and Vigour of the *Mind* likewise, and inu-
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* (Deus) non ipsum maledixit Adam, sed Terram in Operibus ejus, quoniam quidem transfudit Deus Maledictum in Terram, ut non perseveraret in Homine. Irenæi Lib. 3. Cap. 35.

ring it to many Virtues. The Sterility of the Earth compell'd him to betake himself to Industry; and his Necessity, which is the Mother of Invention, sharpen'd his Wit, and laid the Foundation of all the useful Arts that have been found out ever since, which are the natural Means of overcoming the Curse on the Ground, as will be shewn in the next Chap-
The low * Diet and hard Labour to which he was condemn'd, subdued the Impetuosity of his Appetites and Passions, which unsubdued, or supported in Luxury and Idleness, would have run Riot. And as his Guilt had reduced him to a Necessity of leaving this World, the Curse on the Earth made it less desirable to him, wean'd his Affections from it, and made him more resigned and willing to part with it, when the Time of his Departure should approach. The Woman's Sentence to Sorrow in Child-bearing, was wisely ordain'd as a Check and Restraint upon her Inclination to carnal Pleasure, and as a great Preservative of her Chastity: And by making her subject to her Husband, was establish'd that necessary Subordination of the one Sex to the other, which was graciously appointed to prevent endless Contentions for Superiority, which could never otherwise have been decided. The Sentence on the Serpent convey'd to Mankind a general Hope of some Remedy for the Evil they lay under,† whereby the Expectation of it was kept
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* *Revel. examin'd*, Vol. 1. P. 114.
lock on Prophecy, Diss. 3.

† See Bishop *Sher-*

66 *Remarks on the State*

alive from Age to Age; a Sense of Religion, with the great Duties of it, Faith, Hope, and Trust, was maintain'd; and at the same Time, the Designs of Providence whereby this Means carried on in bringing about the great Work of our Redemption.

Irenæus has a Thought, * that God's turning Man out of Paradise, and preventing his Approach to the Tree of Life, was design'd in pure Compassion to him, as the eating of that Tree, after his Fall, would be attended with no other Effect, than to perpetuate his Sin and Misery beyond the Possibility of a Recovery. And probably, the Plenty and Happiness of the paradisiacal State, having been already abused by him, his Continuance in it had only administer'd Occasion to his immersing himself the more in Sense, and indulging himself in Ease and Luxury.

Therefore his Expulsion out of Paradise, and Change of State consequent thereupon, whatever Appearance of Severity it may have, was, indeed, no more than a necessary Measure, a wholesome Discipline, and as such to be accounted as another remarkable Instance of God's gracious Intention towards his fallen Creature.

Thus did the wise Disposer of all Things contrive to bring Good out of Evil: Not but that

* (Deus) ejecit eum (scil. hominem) de Paradiso, & a Ligno Vitæ longe transtulit: Non invidens ei Lignum Vitæ, quemadmodum quidam dicunt, sed miserans ejus, ut non perseveraret semper Transgressor, neque immortale esset quod esset circa eum Peccatum, & Malum interminabile, & insanabile. *Irenæi* Lib. 3. Cap. 37.

that the Evils of our Fall, are Evils still in their own Nature, which however useful they may be to us, yet are they so only in our fallen State. They were inflicted in Consequence of our Fall, and therefore cannot in that View be consider'd otherwise than under the Notion of a Curse or Punishment; and as such it is one great End and Design of our Redemption, not to rectify and convert them into Blessings, which Mr T. pleads for, but absolutely to remove and destroy them, which I shall hereafter particularly prove it will effect; but this would not be requisite, nor would it be an End worthy of God, to deprive Mankind of them, if they had been really and properly Blessings, or could be converted into such. Consider'd in their moral Use, they are, as I have intimated, to be esteem'd as Chastisements, whereby they become instrumental of much Good to us; but this does not cause them to lay aside their Natures, being no less natural Evils still.

II. God did not leave himself without a Witness in other Respects. For soon after the Fall, Sacrifices were instituted, an admirable Means to inspire Mankind with a Horror of Guilt, and which likewise served for a perpetual Memorial of Mercy from Generation to Generation. Moreover, there is Reason to believe, that God exhibited himself at that Season by some signal Manifestations of his Presence, as he did afterwards in the Tabernacle and Temple. This is implied in *Cain's*

Complaint, that he should be hid from the Face of GOD. As his Punishment was a Signal Warning against Sin, especially the heinous Sin of Murder: So *Enoch's* Translation was a noble Encouragement to Piety and Virtue, and a sure Document that GOD had ample Rewards reserved for the Righteous in a future State.

In the Days of *Enos*, GOD seems to have made some extraordinary Revelations of his Will, particularly with Regard to the divine Worship: For we are told, that then *Men began to call upon the Name of the Lord*, Gen. iv. 26. Or rather, as Mr. *Shuckford* elsewhere judiciously translates the Phrase, *לְקַרְא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה* *LiKeRoA BeSHeM JeHoVaH*, to invoke in the Name of the Lord *Jehovah*, that is, they were then first taught to worship thro' the Mediator.

The last Method of Mercy and Monition for the Amendment of Mankind, was the appointing *Noah* a Preacher of Righteousness, to warn them of the intended Destruction of the World, and to assure them, that for the averting of it, they were to have no more than 120 Years Tryal. There were probably many Preachers of Righteousness before him; some think there were seven very eminent in that Office. So they render 2 Pet. ii. 5. *Noah the eighth Preacher of Righteousness*. But as the Scripture Account of the old World is very short there might probably have been many more Methods used for the Reformation of it,
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than is necessary for us to be acquainted with. However, these that are recorded, are sufficient to vindicate the Ways of GOD with Man, during this Period; since it may hence be collected, that the World wanted neither wise Institutions, nor authentic Teachers from GOD, to keep them in their Duty, and deter them from Evil: Tho' * all was insufficient to stem that Torrent of Corruption, which universally spread over the Face of the whole Earth; nor was even this without its Use, to convince all succeeding Generations of the dismal Effects of the Fall, the Malignity and Contagion of Sin, and to what a monstrous Height Iniquity will rise, if suffer'd to have its full Sway. However,

III. From the History of the *Antediluvian* World, short as it is, it appears, that the Corruption, which at length prevail'd over the whole Earth, tho' speedy, yet was gradual in its Progress. *Cain's* Murder of his Brother is the first heinous Crime recorded in Scripture; and yet this was not committed till about *A. M.* 129, as is inferr'd from the Birth of *Seth*, who was given in lieu of *Abel*, and who was not born till *A. M.* 130. which was probably the Year after his Death. *Cain*, and his Family, after this, fell off apace from their Obedience, and by Degrees corrupted the rest of the World; all except the Descendents of *Seth*, who persevered in their Innocence, maintain'd a Sense of Religion, and kept up the Worship of GOD

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* *Revel. examin'd.* Vol. 1. Dissert. 9.

among themselves for many Generations ; and it was not till towards the last Age of the World, that they departed from the Service of GOD, and were involved in the general Corruption. Agreeably to this, the Curse on the Ground was gradual likewise, and bore Proportion to the Increase of Wickedness. This may be inferr'd from the Repetition of it upon the Offence of *Cain*, *Gen. iv. 12.* which was the same in Kind with the first Curse, and could differ from it only in Degree, as indeed the Words themselves imply, *When thou tillest the Ground, it shall not henceforth, (i. e. as heretofore) yield unto thee her Strength.* The same may be likewise collected from *Lamech's* Prophecy, *This same shall comfort us concerning our Work and Toil of our Hands, because of the Ground which the Lord hath cursed,* *Gen. v. 29.* which are the Words of a Man groaning under the utmost Severity of this Curse. This appears lastly from the Judgment of the Flood, which was inflicted in Consequence of the Curse ; and wherein it arrived at its greatest Height, even to the Destruction of the Earth. And accordingly both the Curse and the Flood are join'd together, as being both owing to the same Cause, *Gen. viii. 21.*

IV. As the prevailing Sins of the Times are recorded to have been Corruption (by which are generally understood Lust and Debauchery, unlawful Mixtures, and Pollutions) and Violence, *i. e.* Cruelty and Oppression ; so the
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the Causes of them seem to have been. 1. The Security and Temptations of a long Life of Youth and Vigour. 2. The great Increase of Mankind, which soon overstock'd the Earth in its then State of Sterility, to that Degree, that they fell to injure, oppress, and destroy each other for their Subsistence. Whence we may observe,

V. That long Life is not always a Blessing, nor design'd by God as an Earnest of his Favour, unless it be attended with other happy Circumstances; since he was pleased to lengthen the Lives of this wicked Race of Men, far beyond what he hath vouchsafed ever since. It is undoubtedly happier with us in our present Circumstances, when Men seldom reach the tenth Part of the Days of the *Antediluvians*, to finish the Term of our Probation so soon, and to be deliver'd out of this present sinful World, rather than have our Lives protracted to such a tedious Length as theirs was; and especially on Supposition that the World were so wicked now, and under so severe a Curse as it was then, which it is to be hoped it is not.

A remarkable Instance of the Truth of this Observation we have in *Enoch*, who being a Favourite of Heaven, was removed out of this World before he had arrived at near half the Age of Man at that Time; agreeably to the Prophet's Observation, *That the Righteous are taken away from the Evil to come*, Isa. lvii. 1.

VI. The Translation of that extraordinary Person without ever tasting of Death, as a Reward of his eminent Probity and Sanctity, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation, was not only vouchsafed to Mankind as a Support and Comfort to them under the Sense of their Mortality, by inspiring them with the Hopes of a Life immortal, of which this was an Earnest—but it was more-over an Intimation to them, that if they overcame the Depravity of their Nature, as he did, they should be delivered from the ill Consequences of it, as he was; the Chiefest of which was Death, temporal and eternal, both which he avoided. For to suppose him delivered from all the ill Consequences of the Fall, before he had been purged from all the Corruption of it, seems to argue a Partiality so contrary to the stated Methods of God's Dealings with Mankind, and to the Law of their Nature, as is not to be supposed in him who *hatb no Respect of Persons*, and in whom *is no Variableness, nor Shadow of turning*. Besides that he had not been qualified for the pure Mansions above, if he had had any sinful Impurities adhering to him. *Enoch*, therefore, having overcome the Corruption of his Nature, of which his Translation was a Proof, was an Instance of the Possibility of the Thing in others also. And moreover he was a Type, not only of our Saviour's Ascension, but likewise of the Change which the Saints shall

shall in a Moment undergo, at the last Trumpet. But of this more hereafter.

VII. From the Longevity of the *Antediluvians* it may be concluded, that God at first designed the Age of Man in general, in all succeeding Periods of the World, for such or for a greater Length. From their Wearing so well, notwithstanding their Corrupting of themselves by Lust and Debauchery, we may justly infer, that the Texture of their original *Stamina* must have been of a prodigious Strength, and that they were built for Immortality. But the great Length of Men's Lives stocking the Earth too fast with Inhabitants in its then barren State, and being made an Occasion of Sin, God thought fit after the Flood to shorten by Degrees the Period of human Life, that the Increase of Mankind might bear a due Proportion to the State of the Earth for their Subsistence, and that Death being brought nearer to their View might draw off their Attachment from this World, and induce them to place it upon another, which at the Distance of so many hundreds of Years it had little Power to effect.

I know this Way of accounting for the Longevity of the *Antediluvians* is objected to by some learned * Men, because of the comparative Shortness of the Lives of *Noah's* Sons, who tho' they had all the Strength of an *Antediluvian* Constitution, fell so far short of

* Burnet's Theory and Shuckford's Connect. B. i. p. 32.

74 *Remarks on the State*

of the Age of their Fore-fathers, that *Shem*, for instance, lived but to 600 Years: And therefore they have sought out other Methods of accounting for it. But they themselves in a great Measure furnish an Answer to this † Objection.

The Decay in the Constitution of *Noah's* Sons proceeded not from any Alteration for the Worse in the State of the Earth and Heavens in the new World, but was the immediate Effect of the Rains and Waters. Wet Weather we know relaxes the Fibres and Muscles, causes a Resolution of the Humours, and sets them all afloat, and otherwise greatly affects the Habit of the Body.

Now when all the Fountains of the great Deep were broken up, and the Windows of Heaven opened, what a Moisture must this have occasioned in the Air, and how unwholesome must the Weather have been during the whole Time the Rains continued?

But moreover as *Noah* and his Family were pent up in a close Vessel, with only one small Window to it, and that not open'd till after the Waters abated. *Gen. viii. 6.* so that they had no Opportunity of drawing any fresh Air, (except what got in thro' the Pores and Crevices of the Vessel, which, as I have shewn, was unwholesome) for a whole Year together, notwithstanding they were crowded with such a Multitude of Animals; I appeal to any Sea-faring Man, if this alone

† *Shuckford ib. p. 346.*

lone had not been sufficient to destroy the strongest modern Constitution. This I take to be a most convincing Proof of the Strength and Firmness of their Frame, that they were able to weather out this Storm, as well as they did: For had they been such weak tender Things, *οἷοι τὸν βροτὸν εἶσι*, they must have been as effectually destroyed in the Ark, as the Rest of the World was out of it.

* *Noah*, * as is well observed, had lived six hundred Years before the Flood came, so that we may reasonably suppose he had contracted a Firmness of Constitution, to be able to weather out the Inconveniences of it, and we find his Life was not sensibly shortned thereby. But his Children were very young Men when the Flood happened, their Natures were not fixed and hardened, so that they scarce exceeded two Thirds of what they might probably otherwise have lived to.

Their Constitutions being thus broken, what Wonder is it, that their Children were affected by it? And that the Decay being once begun, they continued to degenerate for many succeeding Generations? There is no Reason, therefore, for rejecting this Account of the Longevity of the *Antediluvians*: On the contrary we may perhaps be confirmed in it, when we examine the other Causes to which it hath been ascribed.

Some impute it to their Abstemiousness and
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* *Shuckford ib.*

the Simplicity of their Diet, but neither of these Causes if true, was adequate. Indeed Simplicity of Diet, if they confined themselves to the vegetable Kind, might contribute something to this End ; but it doth not appear that they did. On the contrary I am inclined to think,* that animal Food was permitted ever since the first Institution of Sacrifice, that is, in all Likelihood immediately after the Fall, when we are given to understand, that Beasts were slain, *Gen. iii. 21.* the Flesh of which was probably partly consumed in Sacrifice, and partly eaten, as was usual afterwards. Thus we are told with regard to *Abel's* Offering, that *he brought of the Firstlings of his Flock, and of the Fat thereof.* *Gen. iv. 4.* what then became of the Rest of the Meats ? was it thrown away ? that were a Sin. It is probable, therefore, it was eaten, as was customary in all Sacrifices, but such as were made *Holocausts* of, which this was not, since there is no mention made of any Part being offered besides the Fat.

Neither do I see any Ground for supposing them such abstemious regular Livers. I should rather be inclined to believe the contrary of them ; for as they were addicted to all manner of Vice, and particularly Lust, of which Intemperance is a never-failing Companion, I can hardly be persuaded to acquit them of it.

But the most plausible Opinion is that of
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* *Vide Heidegger Historia Patriarch. Exercit. xv.*

the ingenious Theorist † above-mentioned ; who attributes the Length of their Lives to their Breathing in a purer Air, and living under a greater Serenity and Equality of the Heavens. And I find this Opinion is espoused by another * very learned Man, which is the more to be wonder'd at, both upon Account of its being so unphilosophical and antisciptural. That it is built upon a wrong Hypothesis in Philosophy hath been shewn by others. I shall therefore only take Notice of its Inconsistency with Scripture and Divinity.

The Curse on the Ground was denounced on the Fall, and there is all the Reason in the World to suppose it took place immediately then. The Words of it are particularly directed to *Adam*. *Cursed is the Ground for THY Sake, in Sorrow shalt THOU eat of it, and Thornes and Thistles shall it bring forth to THEE.* Gen. iii. 17, 18. Accordingly he is turned out of Paradise *to till the Ground and eat his Bread in the sweat of his Face* ; and that the Curse was continued or rather increased during the Continuance of the old World, I have shewn above p. 70. Now how is this consistent with that constant Serenity and Equality of the Heavens—that even Temperature of the Seasons—that perpetual Equinox, and one continued Spring, of which these Writers give so fine a Description ? This suits the Paradisiacal State rather than that which

† Dr Burnet's Theory.

* Shuckford Connest. B. i. p. 33.

which succeeded it ; at least the Loss of Paradise was very supportable, when every Thing went on so smoothly out of it. For it cannot be supposed that the Earth could be unfruitful, when the Heavens were so favourable ; since common Observation informs us, that the Fruitfulness of the one depends upon the Favourableness of the other. It is, therefore, more agreeable to Scripture and Reason to suppose, that the Sterility of the Earth was attended with a proportionable Degree of Inclemency in the Air, and Instability in the Seasons, or rather that it chiefly proceeded from it, and both from the Wickedness of the then World, to which they bore Proportion and with which they gradually increased. For it is contrary to the Methods of God's Providence, as well as to the Tenor of Scripture, *That he should open the good Treasures of Heaven to so wicked and profligate a Race of Men, and lavish his Blessings upon such unworthy Objects.* It is more consistent with both to believe, * that the Curse on the Ground was more severely felt in the old World, than it hath been ever since ; agreeably to what the Psalmist observes, *That God turneth a fruitful Land into Barrenness for the Wickedness of them that dwell therein.* † To proceed.

VIII. The Inhabitants of the old World having withstood the Offers of God's Grace, and overcome the Strivings of his Spirit, were

* See Bishop *Sherlock's Use of Prophecy.* Disc. iv. and Dissert. 2. † Ps. cvii. 34.

were at last arrived at such a monstrous Height of Wickedness, that it was become impracticable for God himself to bring about a Reformation of them by any Methods consistent with the State of Free-Agents, at least within such a Period of Time as he had limited for the Duration of this World ; and, therefore, their Destruction was become inevitable—and *his saving a Remnant* amidst such a crooked and perverse Generation, and preserving *a holy Seed* for the Peopling of the new World was a special Instance of the Providence of God, that his Grace might have the fitter Subjects to operate upon, in order to the gradual Reformation and Restoration of the human Nature.

IX. I observe, that the Deluge, with the several Circumstances of it, was typical of the future State of the Church and World. Thus *Noah*, as he was the Restorer of Mankind after the Flood, was a Type of our Saviour ; and his Father, from the Name he gave him, is supposed by some to have conceived Hopes, that he himself was the promised Seed. The Ark was a Type of the Church ; and the Waters of the Deluge were typical of those of Baptism : For as in the former, the old World was drowned and destroyed, the Sins and Pollutions of it washed away, the Face of the Earth renewed, and those who emerged were saved ; so the Apostle tells us, *that hereunto Baptism is a like Figure*, 1 Pet. iii. 21. which is a means of
saving

80 *State before the Flood.*

saving the Christian World, by purging off and destroying its filthy and sinful Pollutions, and making us *new Creatures*. Accordingly it is called *Ἀνακρινώσις, Παλιγγενεσία* &c. and the Deluge being here compared to it, may be supposed to have been the same to the natural, as Baptism is to the Christian World. And tho' at first *there were but few, that is, eight Persons saved in the Ark by Water*, yet as they afterwards increased, and still continue increasing to great Multitudes; so those Christians, tho' at first but few, that in the Gospel Age were saved by Baptism, shall yet continue increasing till they grow *into a great Multitude, which no Man can Number, of all Nations, and Kindreds, and People, and Tongues.* Rev. vii. 9.

To this may be added, that the Mildness necessarily to be supposed in the Creatures which were taken into the Ark, was an Indication, that they should hereafter be restored to their first Mildness and Subjection to Man. Their being all fed with Fodder, the only Food which can well be supposed to have been provided for their Subsistence in the Ark, implies, that they shall cease to annoy Man, and to prey upon each other; but that Beasts of Prey shall be satisfied with vegetable Food, according to *Isaiab's Prediction, The Lyon shall eat Straw like the Ox.* Ch. xi. 7. But of this more hereafter.

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

Remarks on the State of Man and of Nature after the Flood; particularly concerning the Removal of the Curse from off the Ground.

WHEN *Noah* and his Family first came out of the Ark, the Face of Nature, undoubtedly, afforded them a very dismal and melancholy Prospect; nothing but Desolation and Ruin was any where to be seen, and the whole Creation was but one wide Waste.

As the Deluge was thus fatal to the Old World, it cannot well be supposed otherwise than that it left some lasting Effects upon the New; but whether for the better or the worse is the Question upon which learned Men have been divided.

As GOD had satisfied his Justice and Vengeance upon the old World, by an utter Devastation of it—as the few that survived had been remarkably distinguished, by his providential Care and Mercy in saving them from the common Destruction—as it is a favorite Maxim in the divine Politicks to bring Good out of Evil—lastly, as the Earth had been so well flooded and saturated with Water for

82 *Remarks on the State*

so long a Time, and also manured with the Carcasses of so many Millions of Men and other Animals converted into its Substance—hence I say, without going any farther, one would be apt to conclude, that the Drowning of the old World was the enriching of the New, and that it arose out of the Deluge much refreshed and renovated.

This is certain, that an Opinion prevailed among many of the Antients, that the very Earth was corrupted, as well as its Inhabitants, and was therefore destroyed and form'd a-new at the Deluge, which was reputed a kind of Lustration or Purification of the World.

A great Author hath gone so far as to maintain, that the Earth not only became more fertile after the Flood, but that it recovered the original Fertility it had before the Fall, and that the Curse then laid on it, had its Period with the old World, and was fully executed and accomplished in the Flood. * And it must be owned, that his Reasonings and Reflections are in the main very just, and that he hath much Countenance from Scripture for his Opinion.

But notwithstanding the Deference I have for the Authority of so great a Name, from which, for the singular Felicity in interpreting Scripture on which it is founded, it is by no means desirable to differ in any Instance; yet in this I cannot entirely subscribe

* Bishop Sherlock's Use and Intent of Prophecy. Disc. 4.

scribe to it, tho' I have the Happiness of agreeing with his Lordship in the main Doctrine, wherein he seems to have the justest Notions of Man's Recovery from the Fall of any Author I have met with.

'I think I see plainly,' says he in one place, 'a gradual Working of Providence towards the Redemption of the World from the Curse of the Fall.' * But if I rightly understand his Meaning by the manner in which he explains it, he supposes the several Parts of the Curse to be removed rather *successively*, first one part, and then another, than *gradually* in the strict Sense of the Word; whereas I apprehend the Removal will be strictly and properly gradual. *i. e.* that all the several Parts of the Curse will keep Pace with each other, and be worn away together by Degrees: Where the Difference is not in the Doctrine, but in the Manner of explaining it.

What his Lordship chiefly grounds his Hypothesis upon is the Prophecy of *Lamech*, Gen. v. 29. *This same shall comfort us concerning our Work and Toil of our Hands, because of the Ground which the Lord hath cursed.* From whence he very justly infers, 1. 'That this Curse subsisted in all its Rigour till the Days of *Lamech*;' or rather, I should chuse to say, that beginning at the Fall it continued increasing in Proportion to the Increase of Wickedness in the World, till his Time, and even till the Deluge. 2. 'That as there was

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‘ an Expectation in *Lamech's* Time of a Deliverance from the Curse of the Fall,’ so there was no Ground ‘ to expect it to be performed immediately, or all at once, but by Degrees ;’ which Notion of a gradual Deliverance I likewise ‘ believe to be most agreeable to all that hath happen’d since, and to the present State of Things under the Gospel.’ Nor can I deny, that the *Antediluvians* had such a Notion ; tho’ it be most natural to suppose, that their Notions of it were not so clear and distinct, but more general, sanguine, and confused.

Be that as it will, the Prophecy, however understood, hath undoubtedly been verified in the Event : But to that End I humbly conceive it was not necessary, ‘ that the Earth should be entirely restored from the Curse laid on it at the Fall,’ because I apprehend the Prophecy doth not intimate so much. It promiseth, indeed, an Abatement of the Toil and Labour there was in cultivating the Ground ; but not a Removal of it to such a Degree as his Lordship contends for. The very Words suppose a Continuance of the Curse in some Measure. *This same shall comfort us concerning our Work and Toil of our Hands, because of the Ground which the Lord hath cursed.* For *Comfort* implies a Continuance of Sorrow and Affliction, and is never design’d to rescue us from, but to relieve us under it. Therefore all that can be inferr’d from this Text, or indeed, from the whole Tenor of
Scrip-

Scripture is, that the Curse was in *Part* removed from the Ground after the Deluge, and that the Earth was in some *Measure* restored to its original Fruitfulness. This much, and I think no more, can be fairly concluded from hence. And this sense, if I mistake not, will render the Scripture most consistent with it self, where it mentions any Thing concerning the Fertility or Sterility of the Earth, and is likewise most agreeable to the State of the World ever since.—GOD'S Declaration, Gen. viii. 21. *I will not again curse the Ground for Man's sake, &c.* may be thus paraphrased—'the Curse on the Ground being arrived
' at its full Crisis in the Flood, I will now
' cause it to take a Turn towards an Abate-
' ment, in order to the gradual Removal of it :
' Nor shall the Wickedness of Man hereafter
' provoke me to a total Renewal of it : Much
' less to destroy every Thing living, as I
' have done ; however the Offences of parti-
' cular People or Nations, may require parti-
' cular Visitations of this kind.' And as to the subsequent Blessing. v. 22. *While the Earth remaineth, Seed-Time and Harvest, Cold and Heat, Summer and Winter, Day and Night, shall not cease,* it can mean no more than that there should be a greater Regularity and Constancy in the Return of the Seasons, than had been in the old World, as there must have been, in order to remove the Curse in any sensible Degree. As to the extending of the Covenant, mentioned Chapter

36 *Remarks on the State*

ix. to the Fertility of the Earth, it is what I could easily reconcile to my Sentiments, were I satisfied of the Truth of that Interpretation. But the bare Reading of that Chapter is sufficient to convince us, that that Covenant relates to the *Preservation* of the Earth only, and not at all to the *Restoration* of it to its original Fertility: Two very distinct Things which ought not to be confounded. There is not the least Mention of this in it; but it is expressly, over and over, said to be made in Assurance, *that all Flesh should not any more be cut off by the Waters of the Flood*: And the Bow in the Cloud is repeatedly mentioned as the Token of this Covenant, to which in its Nature it is best adapted, and which is declared in such plain and express Terms, that the Rainbow has never been understood to have been instituted with any other Design: Nor are all the Passages produced to support the former Sense sufficient for that purpose; nay, some of them manifestly restrain it to this latter Sense, as the Reader may see by consulting *Isa. liv. 9. Ps. xxxvi. 5, 6. Eccles. xliv. 18.*

With regard to the Renewal of the Charter to *Noah* in much the same Words, or to the same Effect, with that given to *Adam*, no Argument can be form'd from thence; because the former World being destroyed, and *Noah* now entering upon a new one, he could not replenish the Earth without God's Blessing and Command so to do; neither could he have

a Right to the Use of the Creatures, or Dominion over them, without an exprefs Grant for that Purpose. Notwithstanding the Severity of the Curse on the old World, it did not extend to debarr its Inhabitants from the Privileges of the original Charter granted to *Adam*; and it appears from the Nature of these Privileges, that they actually must have enjoyed them to the last, as far and fully as the Sterility of the Earth would admit of. And tho' the Curse had not in any Measure been removed, *Noah* must have had some such Grant as he had, if GOD intended he should stock the Earth with Inhabitants, and that they should live, and not starve upon it. For Food they must have had; and the additional Grant of animal Food (if it was not used and allowed before the Flood, see p. 76.) is an Instance, not that the Curse was entirely removed from the Ground, but that it still in a great Measure continued; otherwise there had not been so much need of the Grant, if they could have raised a sufficient Supply from the Earth without it: And at the same Time that this Instance proves the Continuance of the Curse, if it proves any thing; it proves likewise the Abatement of the Rigour of it, since GOD was pleased this way to make up the Deficiency there still was in the Produce of the Earth. But my real Persuasion is, that animal Food was permitted in the old World; and therefore that no Argument at all can be drawn from hence.

But if any thing extraordinary be, indeed, implied in the Renewal of *Adam's* Charter to *Noah* and his Sons, why may it not be supposed to contain an Intimation, that those Privileges which he had forfeited, should by Degrees be restored to them in their Posterity?

His Lordship foreseeing it would be objected to his Scheme, 'That the Life of Man' is still Labour and Toil, that he still eats the 'Bread of Sorrow and Carefulness in the 'Sweat of his Brow; and that the Earth 'still abounds with Thorns and Thistles, says, 'That such Complaints as these are the Effect 'of Prejudice,' p. 105. But certainly, while there remain any Grounds for such Complaints as these, it cannot be said, that the Curse on the Earth is entirely removed; for wherever Thorns and Thistles abound, there the Curse remains, if Scripture says true. That *Adam* was design'd for some Employment, Reason itself would tell us, tho' Scripture should be silent; but that his Employment was to be attended with Fatigue and Sorrow, we cannot believe, because these Circumstances are Part of the Curse. And as the Bulk of Mankind still eat their Bread in the Sweat of their Brow, it will not be an easy Matter to convince *them*, either from Scripture or Experience, that that Part of the Curse is not *felt* by them.

His Lordship having observed, that there are several Passages of Scripture, which speak of the Goodness of the Earth, and the great Plenty it affords, asks with great Reason, p. 112.

'How

‘ How comes it to pass, that this very Earth,
 ‘ cursed with Barrenness, is afterwards repre-
 ‘ sented as flowing with Milk and Honey,
 ‘ abounding with Oyl and Wine, and every
 ‘ Thing useful and pleasant in Life?’ Can you
 imagine,‘ says he, ‘ this Land of Plenty to be
 ‘ Part of the cursed Earth? yet this is the
 ‘ Case, if no *Alteration* has happen’d ; and it
 ‘ will be no easy Work to reconcile these
 ‘ Contradictions.’ Undoubtedly it will not,
 they are not to be reconciled. But supposing
 an *Alteration*, the Difficulty is solved at once,
 without having Recourse to a total Change.

But there is another Contradiction which his
 Lordship hath not attempted to reconcile, and
 which seems no less difficult to be reconciled
 to his Scheme; and that is, the severe Curse of
 Barrenness, which God denounced, *Levit.*
xxvi. and *Deut. xxviii.* upon the Land of the
Jews, which he hath since fully executed upon
 it, *making it a Desolation of many Generati-*
ons, as it continues to be even to this Day ; not
 to mention the Barrenness of several other Parts
 of the Earth, of much greater Extent than
Judæa; or the Traditions we have of many
 Dearth and Famines, some of which were
 universal, that have happened in several Ages
 of the World. With Regard to all which,
 it may be ask’d, Is this any Part of that Earth,
 which was restored to its original Fertility,
 which is cursed in this manner? or, Is it not
 sure the old World? Is it to the Inhabitants
 of this renovated Earth that God thus addresseth

seth himself? *Cursed shalt thou be in the City and in the Field—in thy Basket, and in thy Store—in the Fruit of thy Land—increase of thy Kine, and Flocks of thy Sheep—Thy Heaven that is over thy Head shall be Brass, and the Earth that is under thee shall be Iron—The Lord shall make the Rain of thy Land Powder and Dust, from Heaven shall it come down upon thee till thou be destroy'd, Deut. xxviii. 16, &c. and Lev. xxvi. 19, 20. Your Strength shall be spent in vain, for your Land shall not yield her Increase, neither shall the Trees of the Land yield their Fruits. Is the Earth subjected again to the old Curse, after it was once fully executed and accomplish'd? Or how comes it that it is inflicted upon any Part of it at any Time, after it hath been once wholly and absolutely removed?—If it be said, *That God hath turn'd fruitful Lands into Barrenness for the Wickedness of them that dwell therein*; I grant it: But how is this to be reconciled with his Lordship's Sense of that Text? *I will not again curse the Ground any more for Man's Sake, though, as he justly renders it, the Imagination of Man's Heart be evil from his Youth.* But admitting the Paraphrase I have above given of it, all Inconsistency disappears.*

The Truth of the Matter seems to be this, and to lie in the Middle, as it generally does, between both Extremes, viz. That the Curse of the Ground, after the Flood, was neither entirely removed, nor entirely continued.—But that, it was much alleviated; or removed

in Part, and continued in Part—That as it is most agreeable to Reason and Religion, to suppose, that from the Time the Curse was first denounced, it increas'd gradually, in Proportion to the Increase of Men's Wickedness, till the Flood, when both the one and the other arrived at their highest Crisis; so it is no less consonant with both Reason and Scripture to believe, that the Removal of this Curse on the Ground, hath hitherto been, and will continue to be gradual likewise—That as there is a manifest Connection between the natural and moral World; and as they both fell together, so they shall both rise together—and that the Restoration of the one will bear exact Proportion to that of the other—That *Noah* and his Family being righteous Persons, for the Times in which they lived,* the Curse was removed to such a Degree, as bore Proportion to the Sum of their Righteousness—and that it generally hath been ever since, in all the several Ages and Nations of the World, abating or increasing in reciprocal Proportion to the Increase or Abatement which there was in those Nations and Ages, in Virtue, Industry, and true Religion—
and

Gen. vi. 9. It is said, *Noah was a just Man, and perfect (or upright) in his Generations, i. e. in his Age, or for the Age in which he lived; as the Word in the Original signifies, which is not תולדות ToLeDoTH, which is used in the former Part of the Verse, and is there and elsewhere properly render'd Generations, but בדרתיו BoDeRoTHaIV, which ought to be translated, in his Age.*

and that it will continue so to do to the End of the World. Tho' God sends his Rain upon the Just and the Unjust, being mindful of his Promise, *that he would not again curse the Earth for Man's Sake, tho' the Imagination of his Heart be evil from his Youth—* tho' he vouchsafes to the worst of Sinners, in common with the Righteous, yet still for their Sake, and under their Umbrage, *Rain from Heaven, and fruitful Seasons, filling their Hearts with Food and Gladness,* and showers down upon us all Abundance of Blessings more than we deserve—yet the general Method of his Providence, is to make his temporal Blessings the Rewards of Obedience, and his Curses of that Kind, the Punishments of Disobedience, *and to cause his Rain to come, either for Correction, or for Mercy.* Job xxxvii. 13.

This must be evident to any one who reads the 28th Chap. of *Deut.* for tho' the *Israelites* were under a temporal Covenant, establish'd upon temporal Promises and Threatnings, yet these were agreeable to natural Religion, and every Institution and Sanction of their Law, was suitable, in their State and Circumstances, to the Natures and Fitnesses of Things; and accordingly we meet with nothing in the Gospel contradictory thereto, but what rather doth confirm it, making Allowances for the Change of Circumstances under both Dispensations. And therefore temporal Blessings, under the Gospel, are likewise promised as the Rewards of Religion. Thus *Matt.* vi.

33. *Seek ye first the Kingdom of GOD and his Righteousness, and all these Things shall be added unto you.* So Matt. v. 5. *Blessed are the Meek, for they shall inherit the Earth.* And 1 Tim. iv. 8. *Godliness is profitable unto all Things, having the Promise of the Life that now is, as well as of that which is to come.* Whence it appears, that the conditional Promise of temporal Blessings made to the *Israelites*, is convey'd down to us Christians; and, by the Rule of Contraries, the same may be inferr'd of temporal Curses; and that both the one and the other are made Part of the Sanctions of Reveal'd Religion in general; tho' not in so eminent a Degree, under the Christian, as for some Ages they were, under the *Jewish* Dispensation.

I hinted above, that the Curse of the Ground will not be removed for the Sake of Piety and Virtue alone, without the natural Means of Labour and Industry in cultivating the Earth. The Invention of Arts and Implements of Husbandry, and the Improvements which one Age hath made upon another in manuring and tilling the Ground, have undoubtedly render'd the Toil and Work of Men's Hands, less and less burthensome to them. By the Art of taming and managing the Beasts, and, as it were, pressing them into our Service, which was not effected at once, the most laborious Part of the Work is transferr'd upon them; and by that Means Man's Dominion over them is so far recover'd,

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94 *Remarks on the State*

By the Improvements likewise, which in these latter Ages especially, have been made in *Mechanicks*, a great Part of the Labour of Life, hath been thrown back upon inanimate Matter itself; and by the happy Investigation of the *Laws of Motion*, and a dextrous Application of the *Mechanical Powers*, one Man can now perform with Ease, what hath otherwise surmounted the united Force of many; whereby Nature is in a great Measure made to do her own Work.

And as Nature hath been thus brought in to the Assistance of Man; so Man, by the late Discoveries in natural and experimental Philosophy, and other Sciences, hath learn'd greatly to assist Nature in its Productions; in meliorating the Fruits of the Earth, and improving them to far greater Perfection than in its wild uncultivated State it was capable of bringing them.

But such is the Prejudice which reigns amongst Men, against the present State of Things, that some may be apt to give a wrong Turn to these Arguments, and be induced to think, that these Helps, which have been found out in latter Ages, arose from the greater Necessity of the Times, and that they are a Proof, that Nature formerly was more vigorous and free in her Productions, and that the Earth afforded a greater and better Supply with much less Trouble.

I cannot better answer this Objection, than in the masterly Words of the Right Reverend
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Author above-mention'd, who in a genteel and handsome Manner, peculiar to himself, removes this Prejudice arising from the common Notion of the present and past State of the Earth.—* ‘ Instead, says he, of seeing any
‘ Alteration, for the better—Men think they
‘ see an Alteration for the worse in every Age:
‘ Nature seems to them to be almost spent and
‘ worn out, and less able to provide for her
‘ Children now than formerly. These are the
‘ Sentiments of the present Age, and they were
‘ so of those past. We meet with many Reflections of this Kind in grave and serious
‘ Authors: St *Cyprian*, I remember, complains, that Things were sensibly grown
‘ worse, even in the Compass of his own Time.
‘ That the Seasons of the Year were not so
‘ pleasant, nor the Fruits of the Earth so delightful and refreshing as he remember'd
‘ them. I wonder not at his Judgment, for I
‘ find myself every Day growing into the same
‘ Opinion. The best and the choicest Fruits
‘ served up at the Tables of the Great, have
‘ no such Relish as those which they once
‘ provided for themselves, when they were
‘ young: And many there are who can now
‘ find but few Days good enough to be abroad,
‘ who yet can remember few bad enough to
‘ keep them at home. Such Observations,
‘ therefore, as these, shew how much Men alter
‘ themselves, but they shew nothing else.’

Nothing ought to be added to this fine
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* Use and Intent of Prophecy. p. 94.

96 *Remarks on the State*

Reflection, on which it would be safer to rest the present Argument, than to carry it farther. Notwithstanding, I cannot forbear recommending it to such as would form a true Judgment of the Case, that they would carry their Thoughts farther back than the scanty Extent of their own Memories, and without having Recourse to far-fetch'd Instances, that they would compare the present, with what, we are told, was the original State of this Island, to be convinced how much it hath been alter'd for the better, by Culture and good Husbandry.*

Whoever considers, that the only natural Produce of this cold Northern Climate, were Hyps and Haws, the Fruit of Thorns and Briars, with which the Earth was originally curst; and looks abroad into the Gardens and Fields, and beholds what Variety of excellent Fruits flourish in them—sees how all Manner of Exoticks are, by Art and Management raised and propagated — *how this Wilderness is become like EDEN, and this Desert like the GARDEN OF THE LORD, Isa. lvii. 3.*—Whoever impartially considers this, I say, will be apt to entertain more favourable Thoughts of the present State of the Earth, and will no longer doubt how much the Care
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* It is observable, that the Month *September* in the *British* Language, is call'd *Mis Medi*; which signifies, *Reaping*, or *Harvest Month*; whence it appears, that Harvest was much later formerly in this Island, (the whole of which was possess'd by the antient *Britons*) than at present, since the Bulk of it is now generally over in most Parts of it, before that Month begins.

and Industry of Man, under the Blessing of GOD, contributes to the Removal of the Curse from off the Ground.

I think therefore, it may be laid down as a Maxim, that the primæval Fertility of the Earth is recoverable, in Proportion to the Virtue and Industry of Man. For as the Curse was brought on the Ground by Sin, what can remove it but its contrary? And as Industry itself duly regulated and directed, including the Application of our Faculties to the Invention of useful Arts, is a Virtue; it is undoubtedly the Object of GOD's Blessing as much as any other; and the particular Blessing adapted to it is to grant Success and Prosperity to its Endeavours. When GOD therefore sees in a People a general Disposition to serve and obey him, and an honest Industry in their respective Callings, no doubt, *but he will open unto them his good Treasure; the Heaven to give the Rain unto their Lands in his Season, and to bless all the Work of their Hands.* Deut. xxviii, 12. or, as the Prophet *Malachi* expresses it, *That he will open the Windows of Heaven, and pour them out a Blessing, that there shall not be Room enough to receive it.* Chap. iii. 10.

The Reader is now to judge, whether this be not the most easy and natural Account of the Removal of the Curse from off the Ground; and whether it be not the most suitable to the present State of the World, as well as to Scripture, and that which best reconciles

98 *Remarks on the State*

Scripture to itself. It is likewise most suitable to the Wisdom of GOD in removing the Curse from off the Ground, to make Man an Under-labourer in this Work ; for as it was brought on the Earth by him, it is highly fit and reasonable, that he should do his Part towards the Removal of it, especially as he alone reaps the Benefit. This Doctrine also affords the noblest Argument for the Encouragement of Industry: Besides, where Things can be accounted for in the natural Way, we never ought to have Recourse to any other.

The Supposition of the Earth's greater Fertility after the Flood, will serve to account for a Circumstance which hath afforded Matter of Scandal to the Friends, and of Triumph to the Enemies of Religion. We are told, *Gen. ix. 20, 22. That Noah planted a Vineyard, and drank of the Wine, and was drunken.*

Now, tho' it would be no just Impeachment of Scripture, if this Act of Intemperance in *Noah* were left without Excuse*, yet if a probable Plea be offered in his Behalf, it ought in Good-Nature and Charity to be admitted.

Now, on the foregoing Supposition, *Noah*, who before was not unacquainted with the Juice of the Grape, planting a Vineyard, and drinking such a Quantity of Wine, as formerly served only for a moderate Refreshment, was deceived in its Strength, and overtaken by it, in the Manner related in Scripture. For

* See Note, p. 91.

the Grape, as well as all other Fruits, being improved in Proportion to the Improvement of the Earth's Fertility, its Juice became more spirituous, and powerful; and might easily impose upon, and overcome a Man, otherwise temperate and sober, in the first Trial of it.

And thus I think *Noah's* Crime is much alleviated, if not entirely excused, and freed from any Immorality, as it was merely the Effect of Surprise.

Here likewise we find a Foundation for that *Jewish* Tradition, that the Vine which *Noah* planted, was not of ordinary terrestrial Growth, but was carried down the River out of Paradise, or at least out of *Eden*, and found by him.

CHAP. V.

*Containing some farther Remarks
on the State of the World in the
early Ages of it ; particularly
with Regard to the Causes which
retarded its Reformation in this
Period.*

MANKIND, when they enter'd upon the new World, had a very fair setting out ; and this, if ever, had been the Time, one would think, for their Recovery from the ill Effects of the Fall, and regaining the original Rectitude of their Nature. As they were so few in Number, and those selected for their Piety and Goodness, out of the whole Race of Mankind—as they had been Eye-Witnesses of God's severe Vengeance upon Sinners, and had themselves obtain'd Mercy in so signal a Deliverance from the common Destruction ; one might expect at first to hear of nothing but Goodness, Virtue and Piety, in the Inhabitants of the new World ; and that the Judgments of GOD had operated so strongly upon their Fear, and his Mercy on their Gratitude, that they would conspire one and all to extirpate all Remains of Sin from among them ; and take such Care in the Government of themselves and Families,

State after the Flood. 101

lies, as would effectually have prevented the Return of it, and restored them by Degrees to the lost Image of their Maker.

But if we take a nearer View of the Matter, these Expectations will appear to be too sanguine. Whatever comparative Goodness the Remnant which was saved had to recommend them to God's Mercy; yet that they were far removed from Perfection, without descending to Particulars, appears from that universal Corruption, which, like a second Inundation, prevail'd over the Face of the whole Earth, even in the Time of those that had been saved out of the *first*, and while the Memory of it must have been still fresh upon their Minds. The Flood was a Check to the Wickedness of the succeeding Generations, but not a Cure for it: That was to be brought about in another Manner. The Evil of the Fall was of too obstinate and inveterate a Nature to be healed all at once: it was to be removed only by slow Advances and Degrees, and a long Course of Alteratives was necessary to effect a thorough and complete Cure. These *veteres Avia* had taken too deep a Root in human Nature to be pluck'd out all at once. The Poison instill'd was slow in its Infection, and therefore the more Difficult of Cure, and it must be a Work of much Time to purge off all Remains of it, and restore and rectify so vitiated a Habit.— Besides, if we consider the Disadvantages Mankind labour'd under in these early Ages, we

can have no great Idea of their Abilities, nor think them capable of rising to any great Heights of Perfection. Nature was then, as it were, in its Infancy, its Powers weak, its own Stock of Notions low in Kind, and small in Quantity, and its Helps from abroad few and inconsiderable. Little was to be learn'd from former Ages; and supposing *Noah* to have convey'd down all that was worth preserving in the old World, it could not be very considerable, whether we regard the Character or Continuance of it. Revelation likewise was then but beginning to dawn, the Advantages of which, tho' we are now blessed with its Light, we can yet never be fully sensible of, unless we first, with them, had experienced the Want of it. Nor did this Ignorance of the divine Will, in which the World was suffer'd to continue, proceed from any Scantiness or Partiality in the Dispensations of Providence; for God was never wanting to Mankind in giving them Light and Aid in their Duty, in such Measure and Proportion, as their several Necessities required, and Capacities would admit.

The Scheme planned out for the Recovery of lapsed Man, consists of a Series of Dispensations, each of which tallied exactly with the Circumstances of the World, at the Time it was made; to every Period of which it was wisely accommodated, and was the best fitted to promote its End, that the Nature of Things would admit, tho' the Fitness

ness of it in every Respect, may not appear unto us. In all his Dealings with the Sons of Men, God acts more in Proportion to their *Wants* than his own *Fulness*. Therefore in the early Ages he was more sparing of the Revelations of his Will to Mankind, and accommodated his Instructions to their Infirmities and Incapacities.

When the World was in its Infancy, it was to be fed *with Milk, and not with strong Meat*: Accordingly, the Religion of it was simple, and its Faith consisted of but few Articles. The Knowledge of the true God, and some general Expectations of a Redeemer, together with a few plain Precepts of Morality, such as those seven Precepts supposed to have been deliver'd by *Noah* to his Sons, comprized all that was to be believed and practised by them. Those *Times of Ignorance* God *winked at*, and many Imperfections were indulged, which were not to be tolerated in a more perfect State. *He had many Things to say unto them, but they could not bear them*, all at once: He therefore gave them *Line upon Line, Precept upon Precept, here a little, and there a little*; suitably to the Size of their Understandings; and would not let in too much Light at once upon weak Eyes, lest instead of enlightning, it should only dazzle and confound them.

It was in Compliance with the Grossness of their Apprehensions, that God made such frequent Manifestations of himself to holy

Men of Old, under visible Appearances; that he made Impressions upon their Imaginations, by Dreams and Visions, and conversed with them by audible Voices, and such like sensible Applications, addressing himself more to their Senses and Passions, than to their Reason.

Hence likewise it may be presumed it was, that in all his Dispensations preceding the Gospel, he did not make clearer and more express Revelations of a future State; but enforced his Laws by the Sanctions of temporal Rewards and Punishments only, which were more suitable to that Age and Season of the World, and more likely to operate upon them, than any Motives fetched from another Life.

Thus the Covenant made with *Noah* was of a temporal Nature; such another in kind was made with *Abraham*; and renew'd with the Jews, a carnal People; whose Law likewise was founded merely upon Promises of temporal Blessings, and Threats of temporal Curses and Punishments; and *Life and Immortality were not brought to Light, but by the Gospel.*

It may be thought just Matter of Surprise, and has been objected against by the Enemies of Religion, that God Almighty should shew so much Favour to the *Israelites*, a People who seemingly so ill deserved it, *That he should bear them upon Eagles Wings, and bring them unto himself, that he should lead them about and instruct them, and keep them as the*
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Apple of his Eye,—that he should esteem them *a peculiar Treasure* to himself *above all People, a Kingdom of Priests, and an holy Nation*. Deut. xxxii. 10. Exod. xix. 4,5,6. And all this, when they requited him with so much Perverteness and Ingratitude, and gave him so much Reason to complain of their being *a rebellious and stiff-necked People*.

GOD is no Respector of Persons or Nations, and he is not partial in the Distribution of his Favours: How then shall we reconcile his distinguishing Regard for this undeserving People, with the wonted Impartiality of his Justice? We shall find it a difficult Task upon any other Supposition than this, which is the real Truth of the Case; *viz.* that how undeserving soever they were in themselves, yet in respect of the rest of Mankind, they might notwithstanding be reckoned *a holy Nation*; and it was comparatively true, tho' far from being strictly so, *that GOD had not beheld Iniquity in Jacob, neither had he seen Perverseness in Israel*. Numb. xxiii. 21. especially, if with some Commentators of greatest Note, we understand the Iniquity and Perverseness here mentioned, of the Sin of Idolatry, which the *Israelites* preserved themselves the freest from of all the People upon Earth; and, when the Rest of the World was overrun with the grossest Superstition, Idolatry, and false Worship, maintained the Worship of the one living and true GOD, and entertained the most just and reverent Sentiments of him,

him, in which and many other respects, they greatly exceeded all the Nations around them, even those that were most celebrated for their Wisdom and Learning.

Their Law-giver, 'tis true, has frequent Occasion to reproach and chastise them, and lays hold of every Opportunity to humble and mortify them, which makes their Character appear in the worse Light to us, and shews it, in truth, to be in itself bad enough: But when he has Occasion to mention them in Comparison with the Rest of Mankind, it is by no Means to their Disadvantage. *The Lord thy GOD hath chosen thee to be a special People unto himself, above all the People that are upon the Face of the Earth. The Lord did not set his Love upon you nor choose you, because ye were more in Number than any People, (for ye were the fewest of all People.)* Deut. vii. 6, 7. where he reckons them to be inferior to others, in no other respect than in their Number. Whereas had they been such a profligate and sottish Race of Men, as the *moral Philosopher* represents them, *Moses*, who never shews any Tokens of Flattery towards them, would undoubtedly have made his Comparison run in a different Strain, and said, *The Lord did not set his Love upon you, nor chuse you, because ye were BETTER than any People (for ye were the WORST of all People)* See Mr *Leland's* ingenious Vindication of them from the unjust Aspersions
and

and scandalous Invectives of the above-mentioned Author. *

Upon the foregoing Supposition we may likewise easily account for the Sins and Mis-carriages of many Saints of Old, who were, notwithstanding, the peculiar Favourites of Heaven, *viz.* because with all their Failings and Infirmities, they were beyond Comparison superior to the greatest Worthies of other Nations, for their true Piety towards God, and Zeal for his Worship in Opposition to Idolatry and Superstition.

And what *Josephus* asserts of his Ancestors in general, in his modest Vindication of them against the scurrilous Abuses of *Apion*, the *moral Philosopher* of those Times, is no more than what is strictly true, *viz.* 'That they
' have proved Authors of better and nobler
' Examples and Precepts than any other Nati-
' on in the World can pretend to.' †

And hence we may be enabled to form an Idea of the State of Morality in these Ages: For at how low an Ebb must we suppose it to have been among the unenlightened Heathen, when it rose no higher among those who had the Advantages of Revelation to guide them, and who by that means may be supposed to have made the greatest Proficiency in it?

Great is the Mystery of Godliness—too great and sublime for the Narrowness of our Ca-

* Divine Authority of the O. and N.T. asserted. Vol. i. p. 207.

† *El. Joseph. contra Apion. Lib. ii. sub fine.*

Capacities to comprehend, otherwise than by Piece-meal, as it were, or *through a Glass darkly*. Therefore the Scheme of our Redemption, which was one and the same from the beginning, was opened and unfolded by Degrees: The first Discoveries of it were made by obscure Hints, and general Intimations given to particular Persons: Then it was shadowed out by the Types and Figures of the Mosaic Law; which was succeeded by the clearer Predictions of the Prophets; which still were but *like a Light shining in a dark place, till at length the Day dawn'd, and Day-star arose*. 2 Pet. i. 19. when this Mystery was fully revealed in the last and most perfect Dispensation of the Gospel. *

But perhaps it may be expected, that agreeably to this gradual Procedure of Providence, I ought to shew, that there hath been, and is a gradual Reformation in the World—that one Age hath improved upon another in Knowledge and Virtue, in Proportion to the greater Light, and other superior Advantages it has had; and that the World, the older it grows, grows daily wiser and better.

Now, tho' I make not the least Doubt, that the World in general is greatly improved in every Respect, especially since the Gospel Age, yet I will not undertake to shew, that this Improvement was made by such a regular and

* See Bishop *Sherlock's* Use and Intent of Prophecy; and *Dr Berriman's Boyle's* Lectures entitled, 'The gradual Revelation of the Gospel.'

and gradual Process; because my Argument no way requires it, neither indeed do I think it true in Fact, or agreeable to the Nature of Man, and Reasons of Things.

For,

I. Such an exact Correspondence between Causes and their Effects is so mechanical a Property, that if it could be made out in particular Instances, and especially in this general one, to belong to Man, it would be a difficult matter to prove him not to be a mere Machine, agreeably to a late System of Philosophy. Necessary Agents may be so impell'd and operated upon; but Man, who is a Free-agent, is not to be moved either to Good or Evil, without the Consent and Concurrence of his own Will.

GOD, by the Laws of his Conduct towards us, can but propose, and after all the Efforts of divine Grace it must be left entirely to ourselves, either to approve or reject. And as the Balance of Man's Will was by the Fall turn'd towards Ill, is it any Wonder that he should be found so often to reject any Assistances offer'd him to give it the contrary Tendency? That he should be so perverse under Cure, as to defeat all the Prescriptions of the great Physician of Souls? That the Distemper, in its Progress, has taken so many different Turns? That it has often risen to great Heights? Has been attended with the most dangerous Symptoms, and has converted the most salutary Medicines into Poison? That

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many Members of the Body diseased have required Excision in order to preserve the Whole? And that even at present it rages so much, that a perfect Cure is, I cannot say despair'd, but not so much as thought of.

But,

II. The Unsuccessfulness of the Methods of Providence for the Reformation of Mankind, and the manifest Increase of Wickedness in several Parts and Ages of the World, is not altogether to be ascribed to the Perverseness and Obstinacy of Man. He who first plotted our Fall, has undoubtedly ever since been employ'd in counter-plotting all Methods used for our Recovery; and as he was so successful in his first Attempt, there is no Question to be made but he has been too much so in his succeeding Endeavours of that kind; of which the State of the World ever since has furnished many melancholy Proofs.

Notwithstanding the many Preservatives and Remedies made use of by Providence against Corruption, in all Ages of the World, this restless and subtle Enemy still found means in a great Measure to frustrate and pervert them. Hence the true Religion came to be so soon corrupted, and the Knowledge of the true God to be in a manner lost; *the Creature was worshipped instead of the Creator*, and Idolatry and Polytheism over-ran the World; and many absurd and impious, cruel, filthy, and abominable Practices were imposed

fed upon wretched Man instead of Religion ; whereby that which was designed for his Cure, became itself his greatest Bane ; and instead of cleansing him from the Filth he had contracted, plunged him the deeper into it.

The very End of Religion being thus destroyed and perverted, it was impossible for Mankind to be better'd by it ; for false Religion debases and corrupts the Mind, as much as true Religion exalts and purifies it ; and how much the one has prevailed over the other, in all Ages of the World hitherto, is too notorious to need an historical Account of it.

Mankind was first taught the Worship of the one true GOD ; but the grand Deceiver found means to change it for that of many false Gods. The Use of Sacrifice was appointed in the former, and it was presently adopted into the latter. No sooner was the *one Mediator between GOD and Man* revealed, and Men taught to worship him, but the Devil counterfeited *Mediators many*, and directed his Votaries to apply to them.

When these and the like Corruptions of Religion began to be general, GOD called and separated a certain Family for the Preservation of his true Worship and Service ; and to this End he instituted a remarkable Rite, which was to be a Note of Distinction between them and all others ; but we find such early Accounts of the Introduction of Circumcision into the heathen Religions, that some

some learned Men have been tempted to think it first obtain'd among them, and that *Abraham* borrowed it from them, and not they from him, as in Truth they did. *

The same renowned Patriarch having, for the Tryal of his Faith, been commanded by God to sacrifice his Son, it is not improbable, that this was made a Pretence for introducing human Sacrifices, tho' God's express Prohibition of it, when it came to the Point of Execution ought to have been look'd on as a Discouragement of so impious and abominable a Rite, rather than a Precedent for it; or else it should have been esteemed as an Authority for the Abolishing of it, if, as some think, it already obtained. †

And tho' *Abraham* and the succeeding Patriarchs were greatly instrumental in the Preservation and Propagation of true Religion, throughout most of the known Regions of the Earth, by means of their own Journeyings and the Dispersion of their Families; yet the Pageantries of Superstition, and the numerous Poms and Vanities, Rites and Ceremonies of Idolatrous Worship so dazzled the Eyes, and captivated the Understandings of the Vulgar, which then included all Ranks of Men, that the plain and simple Religion of the true Worshippers soon grew into Disregard and Contempt. Whereupon the divine Wisdom likewise saw it expedient to in-

* For the Proofs hereof See *Shuckford's Connexion* V. i. p. 323. &c.

† See *Revelation examined* Vol. ii. Dissert. 8.

stitute a Religion abounding with Ceremonies; but such as were not *after the Abominations of the Heathen*, but directly opposite to them; by which means they were to serve as a sort of Check or Counter-balance to them.

And surely never did GOD Almighty manifest himself in so wonderful and dreadful a manner as upon this Occasion: For having brought his chosen People out of *Egypt, with a mighty Hand, and out-stretched Arm*, he delivered his Laws from Mount Sinai to them in the solemn Voice of Thunder and Lightning, *the Mountain* at the same Time *quaking and burning with Fire*. And having train'd them up by a forty Years Discipline in the Wilderness, and supported them during all that Time by a constant Series of Miracles, (the divine Presence also being frequently visible among them, directing all their Marches and Encampments) he at length brought them forth into *Canaan*; no less miraculously exterminating their Enemies, and giving them Possession of that Land.

Now tho' GOD was never present with any People in the Manner he was with them, upon all Occasions remarkably interposing to reward their Obedience and punish their Disobedience; making his Power likewise to be known by Judgments upon their Enemies, and other publick and irrefragable Attestations of the Truth of his Divinity, and that he was GOD alone—yet in such blind and absolute Captivity did Satan hold his Votaries,

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114 *State of the World*

that few, very few of them in Comparison, had power to become Profelytes to the Worship of the true GOD.

On the contrary, he found means to pervert GOD's own People, and seduce them to the Worship of his accursed Idols, insomuch that having in vain endeavoured to reclaim them, by Denunciations and Inflictions of severe Judgements, GOD Almighty at length punished them with the Loss of their Country and Liberty, and ten of the twelve Tribes were so dispersed among the Heathen, that they never after were with any Certainty known or heard of as a distinct People.

Not to persue this Subject any farther, it appears from what has been observed, that the Enemy has been ever employed in *sowing Tares among the Wheat*—That in Consequence of the capital Enmity between him, and the true GOD, He has had the Insolence to maintain a constant Struggle and Contest with his Maker about the Fate of Mankind, and by every Stratagem has endeavoured to prevent the Recovery of human Nature from the Fall he gave it, and even to sink it still deeper in Corruption; and in this it must be owned, he has been, and is still but too successful. And the Contest hath been observed to be so great and of such doubtful Event, that it very early gave rise to the monstrous Opinion of two independent Principles, the one Good, the other Evil, disputing the Fate of Mankind.

A learned Prelate * is of Opinion, that the Book of *Job* was written in Opposition to this ancient Doctrine: Nor indeed can it seem improbable to any one that considers it in this View. On the other Hand, it seems every Way worthy the Spirit of God to convey some such Instruction as this to the more serious and considerate Heathens, as well as *Israelites*, in a matter so abstruse and fertile of Scruples, in order to obviate the Prejudices which would be apt to arise in their Minds, when they considered the Origin of Evil, both moral and physical, and its great Prevalence in the World. The *Israelites*, indeed, were in some Measure guarded against the absurd Doctrine of two independent Principles by the History of the *Fall*, in the beginning of the Book of *Genesis*. But the Design of the Book of *Job* in this respect seems to be more extensive; as I shall shew in its proper Place. In the mean Time I proceed

III. To offer another Reason why the Progress of Reformation in this Period was so slow; viz. that as an universal Reformation was not to be accomplished but by Degrees, so the Design of Providence in these Ages was only to pave the Way and prepare the World for it; and in the mean Time to stop the Progress of universal Corruption, and preserve a true Sense of Religion at least in one Corner of the World.

The most remarkable Dispensation that occurs in the Times under Consideration is the Law of *Moses*; yet it appears from several Characters and Circumstances relating to it, that it was calculated only for the Use of one People, and never intended as a general Law for Mankind; tho' at the same Time it excluded none, but received all that were willing to become Profelytes to it. And tho' it had been ever so extensive in its Design, yet was it not by any means adequate to so great an End as the Reformation and Restoration of the World.

The Law of *Moses*, indeed, required perfect Obedience, but gave no Strength to perform it; it discovered Man's Weakness to him, but prescribed him no Remedy for it: Wherein it laboured under a double Defect *viz.* of pardoning and assisting Grace; for it neither convey'd a full and perfect Remission of Sins past, nor afforded sufficient Assistance to withstand them for the future. And as the Force and Efficacy of all Laws depend upon the Strength of their Sanctions, it was deficient, in this respect likewise, as it made no explicit Declarations of a future State, but was founded only upon temporal Rewards and Punishments; tho' in its spiritual and mystical Sense a future State was implied in, and might be inferr'd from it. * The Im-

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* Mr Warburton, in his *divine Legation of Moses*, endeavours to prove, that a future State makes no Part of, and is not to be found in the Mosaic Dispensation; which favourite

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perfection of the Law of *Moses*, or rather of the State of the People to whom it was given, may be inferr'd also from the Permission

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which Point of his he labours so much, and carries so far, as to have given Disgust to many of his Readers, who have made this the principal Objection against his Performance. For he says, B. v. §. 5. that *Moses* did not teach a future State at all, but omitted it with Design, and that therefore the People had no Expectation, nor Knowledge, nor even *Idea* of it; which Notion he endeavours to establish, not only from the Silence of the sacred Writers about it, but from their positive Declarations to the contrary, as they must be understood in his Sense of them: Thus he makes the *Old T.* to be contrary to the *New* in Opposition to what must be maintain'd by all who believe them both to proceed from the same divine Original, as well as to the express Declaration of our Church in her Article VII. though he afterwards B. vi. §. 5. endeavours to reconcile it to what he had said, but in a manner which I presume gives but little Satisfaction to his Readers.

If a Person may be allowed to judge of his Scheme from what he has discovered of it, methinks, he might have form'd it upon a Plan that would have given less Offence, without any Prejudice to his long-promised Demonstration, and without granting any more than what he has, as it stands at present, been obliged to allow. For he does not deny, but that the Law had a spiritual Meaning, and that it was typical of a future State, and that *Moses* and the antient *Jews*, their Leaders and Fathers especially, believed a future State: Now, as he had shewn, that the antient Heathen Religions and Philosophy had their *exoteric* and *esoteric*, their *publick* and *private* Parts and Doctrines, why might not he have allowed the same to the *Jewish* Dispensation, and have made the *publick* Part of it to have consisted of temporal Rewards and Punishments, as being the only open and publick Sanctions of the Law; and the *private*, to be the Doctrine of a future State of Rewards and Punishments, which he in some sort allows to be spiritually couched under the former, and typified by them? By this Scheme he would have saved both his Trouble and Credit, and might have shortened his Work by more than 200 Pages, as this is a Point which nobody would have disputed with him.

Thus likewise he might have formed a beautiful Contrast between the Jewish and Heathen Religions and Philosophy, and might, if he pleased, as very likely he would, have asserted, that *Moses* copied after the Heathens in this, as he maintains he did

which it indulged them of some Things for the Hardness of their Hearts, which under the perfect Dispensation of the Gospel are forbidden and reckoned highly criminal, as for Instance, Retaliation of Injuries, Polygamy, and the Privilege of Divorce for trivial Causes. *

In a word, the Law of *Moses* shew'd Man-kind

in other Cases : And as far as I can perceive, his Argument would have stood on the same Footing as at present, since it would be grounded on the publick Part only, and not at all affected by the spiritual Meaning. It is the more strange, that he had not gone upon this Plan, as he had a Passage of Bishop *Bull's* under his Eye which strongly hinted as much to him, and which I the rather chuse to insert here in order to rescue him from the Service into which Mr *W.* has press'd him. In the next Section to that which Mr *W.* quotes, Ch. vi. §. 4. of the Bishop's Work, this Question is proposed, Whether there were any under the Law, who hoped for eternal Life? In the Discussion of which are these Words.

Præterea floruerunt singulis Seculis in populo Judaico Viri Dei ac Prophetæ cælitus edocti, quos inter tot Arcana ipsis patefacta, mylticum hunc Legis Sensem penitus ignorasse, nihilq; de futurâ Vitâ intellexisse, nemo prudens suspicabitur. Cum autem nefas sit vel cogitasse, Viros optimos sapientiam, quâ ipsi pollebant, aliis invidisse; credendum omnino est, eos sicubi idoneos invenerint Auditores, evoluisse iis obiecta in Lege Mysteria, singulisque tantum aperuisse, quantum Captus ipsorum et Utilitatis Ratio ferebat. In publicis autem Concionibus Prophetæ ac sapientes ita loquebantur, ut nec in Contemptum adducerent Arcana sanctioris Disciplinæ, et tamen Auditorem attentum ad investigandi sollicitudinem excitarent. Atque hinc natum arbitratur maximus Grotius discrimen antiquitus inter Judæos celebratum, scriptæ Legis, et Legis oralis, quam—Traditionem vocant; utramq; dicentes a Mose profectam: Non quod Res aliæ fuerint in Traditione quam in Lege scriptâ; sed quod ea quæ in Lege scriptâ occultius continebantur, studiosis Indagatoribus enodaret accuratior Interpretatio. Atque hæc quidem docendi Ratio apud Populum crassior, limatior apud res *ωρονόψαλλα* *obtinuisse videtur.*

Harmonia Apostolica. Dissert. post. Cap. x. §. 6.

* Compare Deut. xxiv. 1. Matt. xix. 3. &c.

kind the Necessity there was of a Redeemer, and of a Law of Mercy, at the same Time leaving them in want of both :

And thus it was no more than a *Shadow of good Things to come, and a School-master to bring us to Christ*, our Guardian and Preceptor in our State of Minority ; an imperfect Dispensation suiting an imperfect State ; not to perfect, but only to keep us in order, and to deliver us up to the Gospel for our Accomplishment in Righteousness. *

And if the Mosaic Oeconomy was thus deficient and imperfect for the Purpose of reforming the World, much more so must any preceding Dispensations have been ; tho' neither the one, nor the other was without its Use, and each carried on the Purposes and Designs of Providence, and was most proper and fitting in its Season—As I shall shew in the following Chapter.

* See Gal. iii. 24. with Hammond's Paraphrase in locum.

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CHAP. VI.

Of the Reformation wrought in the World in the Ages preceding the Gospel.

Notwithstanding all the forementioned Difficulties and Hindrances with which the Work of Reformation was embarrass'd, it went on, and the World was more or less benefited and improved by every Step of Providence for that Purpose.

In order to form the better Judgment of the Improvement of the World in general, from the Flood downward, it will be requisite to step back, and take a View of the most remarkable Preservatives, and Antidotes made use of by Providence, against Corruption, in the several Ages of it.

In the first Age, *Noah*, who was invested with the several Authorities of Parent, Governor and Preacher, (which last he cannot be supposed to have neglected in the new World, especially as it had a greater Weight now in Virtue of the other two) *Noah*, I say, made use of this threefold Authority to instil and preserve right Notions of Religion in his Children; which he had the better Opportunity of doing, as they lived a great Part of his long Life in one Society under him.

And we have an Instance of his Care in this
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Reformation before the Gospel. 121

Respect in the Tradition of those seven famous Precepts of his deliver'd to his Sons, which made a sufficient System of Morality for that and several succeeding Ages.

Upon the Increase of Mankind, we are told, that they form'd the Project of building the Tower of *Babel*, the Design of which was to prevent a Dispersion, and get themselves a Name. *Gen. xi. 4.* But God Almighty foreseeing the ill Consequences of this Project, with regard to the Morals and Welfare of Mankind, confounded their Language and Enterprize, and dispersed them abroad over the Face of the whole Earth: By which Means he mortified this vain Humour in the Disappointment of it, and likewise prevented an universal Monarchy, and therein universal Corruption, which at that Time had been the Consequence of it; and by dividing Mankind into distinct Tribes, he reduced them to the Virtue and Discipline of small Societies.

Thus, however Wickedness might prevail in particular Nations, God Almighty, by this one Act of infinite and adorable Wisdom, fix'd so many Barriers against the spreading of it, as there are Societies in the World, differing in Language, Inclination, Interest and Manners, and by this Means render'd an universal Reformation more feasible. *

Or supposing this Confusion did not relate to Language, but to Religion, or to that Part of it call'd Confession, according to *the new Account*

* *Revelation examin'd.*

122 *Reformation of the World*

count given of it, the Dispersion was still attended with the same happy Effects, and the Confusion in this Sense of it, was moreover a Means of checking Idolatry in its Rise, and restraining its future Progress.*

Nor was this Division and Dispersion of the Nations made in a random, fortuitous Manner. On the contrary, the over-ruling Providence and special Hand of GOD interested itself in it very remarkably, in providing fit Means for the Maintenance of a Sense of GOD and Religion in the several Parts of the World. For *when the most High divided to the Nations their Inheritance, when he separated the Sons of Adam, he set the Bounds of the People according to the Number of the Children of Israel.* Deut. xxxii. 8. And St Paul, *Acts* xvii. 26, 27, which is a good Comment upon this Text, gives the Reason of this Regard which was had to the Number of the Children of Israel in the Division of the Nations—*He determined the Bounds of their Habitation, that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him.* The End then of this particular and previous Regard to the Number of the chosen Seed (which is stiled *a peculiar Treasure, a Kingdom of Priests, and a holy Nation,* Exod. xix. 5, 6.) was, that they might bear a fit Proportion to the rest of Mankind, and might be as so much Leaven to the whole Mass; as a quickening and enlivening Principle to ex-
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* See the new Account of the Confusion of Tongues.

cite and maintain due Apprehensions of God, his Worship and Service, in the World.

Now besides, that this is an early and remarkable Instance of God's Forecast and Care for the Instruction of the World, it moreover lets us into the general Methods of his Providence in this respect—It shews us, that it extends to all Nations, and all Ages—That he from Time to Time, and at all Times, raises up a sufficient Number of Men to be his Witnesses, his Heralds and Ambassadors to the rest of the World—That, from the Beginning, he had People chosen and set apart for this Purpose—That he is very exact, and observes certain Rules of Proportion in this Respect, that there may be no Deficiency in their Number; but that they may at all Times increase in due Proportion to the Increase of the rest of Mankind—That this Matter is the particular Object of his predeterminate Counsel and Foreknowledge, since this Regard to the Children of *Israel* was had many Ages before either they, or *Israel* himself, were in Being.

As the Dispersion of Mankind was gradual—As the several Nations may be supposed to have held a Correspondence with each other, after their Separation—And as they lived long to train up their Children in that Knowledge of God, which they had received and been instructed in themselves, there was for many Years a general Agreement about Religion in the World: The first People who departed from the Worship of the true God, were

124 *Reformation of the World*

were the *Chaldeans*; for the Preservation of which, and putting a Stop to the Growth of Idolatry and *Polytheism*, which now began to overspread the World, God was, in a special manner, pleased to call his Servant *Abraham*.

Whoever considers the many remarkable Occurrences and Circumstances in this renowned Patriarch's Life—His several Journeyings, and the extraordinary Manner in which God was pleased to distinguish him, by numerous Blessings, and many signal Protections and Manifestations of his Providence, wherever he went—The many Revelations he was favour'd with; particularly, that of the *Messiah*—That he should spring out of his Loins; through whose Name he was likewise taught to worship*—His Care in propagating these and other important Points of Religion, and instructing his Family in them, attested by God himself—*I know him, that he will command his Children and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Ways of the Lord*, Gen. xviii. 19.—His great Power and Influence, and the Fame of his eminent Virtue and Wisdom, and peculiar Favour with Almighty God, which had spread throughout all the World—Whoever, I say, considers these and other Circumstances in the Life and Character of *Abraham*, will easily conceive, how great an Instrument he must have been in the Hand of God, of diffusing true Religion and Wisdom over the most eminent

* *Shuckford's Connec't.* Vol. 1. P. 291.

Regions of the World; and the Propagation and Dispersion of these Blessings far and wide, made him already, tho' in a lower Sense of that Promise, *a Blessing to all the Nations of the Earth.*

For be it further consider'd, that *Abraham* had a very numerous Family, made up of a great Variety of People of different Countries: and therefore true Religion and Virtue must needs be carried along with them, when they return'd to their own Homes, or wherever the Providence of GOD convey'd them for that Purpose. And not only *Abraham* and his Household, but his Contemporaries, *Lot* and *Melchizedeck*, and their Families, were appointed as Monitors and Instructors to the neighbouring Nations, in the Ways of Righteousness and Piety. Accordingly we have Reason to believe, that the *Moabites* and *Ammonites*, Descendants of *Lot*, long retain'd a true Notion of Religion.

Other Methods proving ineffectual for their Amendment, some Nations were made dreadful Examples of, that others might take Warning by their Fate: Thus *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* were destroy'd by a most miraculous and visible Judgment, and left to be a standing Monument of GOD's severe Vengeance against Sin, especially that most detestable Sin of *Sodom*, to all succeeding Generations; and to impress upon Mankind a Dread of offending him, a Hatred of Vice, and Love of Virtue, together with a lively Sense of his particular

126 *Reformation of the World*

cular Inspection into the Affairs of Men; his strict Justice in punishing Sin, and in rescuing and rewarding Innocence; as well as his remarkable Disposition to Mercy, inasmuch as if there had been but ten righteous Persons in all those wicked Cities, he would have spared them for Ten's Sake.

Besides the Servants, and other Sons of *Abraham*, which were many, *Isaac* and *Ismael* must have been very instrumental in propagating the true Religion. *Ismael's* Mother and Wife were both *Egyptians*; his Sons, twelve in Number, and of great Power, being stiled Princes, and their Dominions of large Extent. *Gen.* xxv. 16, 18. *Isaac* marrying his Wife from *Mesopotamia*, this Alliance and Affinity renew'd with the *Chaldeans*, could not fail of good Effect, for the Preservation and Advancement of true Religion in those Countries. *Esau* married two Wives of the Daughters of the *Hittites*, and by that Means gave them an Opportunity of acquainting themselves with the Religion of the *Hebrews*. He was Father of the *Edomites*, and of a numerous Offspring of Dukes and Kings, who probably professed the true Religion.

Jacob is sent to *Padan-aram*, to marry into the Family of *Laban*, with whom he abode twenty Years; and all that he took in Hand prosper'd, so that there was a visible Power and Blessing of GOD in it, as *Laban* confess'd, *Gen.* xxx. 27. Afterwards GOD manifested himself to the *Egyptians* by a various and won-

wonderful Providence ; for the sojourning of the Children of *Israel*, who dwelt in *Egypt*, was 430 Years, till at last, by *Signs*, and *Wonders*, and *dreadful Judgments*, by *Judgments upon their First-born*, and *upon their Gods*, they were brought out from thence, and the *Nations heard the Fame of it*, and *all the Earth was filled with the Glory of the Lord*.

Thus *Chaldea* and *Egypt*, the most famous and flourishing Countries in those Ages of the World, as well as many other Places of inferior Note, had the true Religion brought home to them by the Patriarchs, who were sent from Place to Place to sojourn, to be a Pattern and Example to the rest of Mankind. And Men who travell'd so far, conversed with so many Nations, and were so zealous for GOD's Honour—had such frequent Revelations, and the immediate Direction of GOD himself in most of the Actions of their Lives,—and who were so Great and Powerful, and Numerous, must needs mightily propagate Religion wherever they came ; nor can it be doubted but that they had great Success in all Places : For even out of *Egypt* where they endured the greatest Hardships, and were held in such Contempt and Hatred, yet *a mix'd Multitude went up also with them*, besides the native *Israelites*, *Exod. xii. 38.*

The wicked *Canaanites*, indeed, were not wrought upon by the Examples and Instructions of the Patriarchs, tho' their chief Residence was among them ; nor yet by the dreadful

128 *Reformation of the World*

ful Judgments upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, the Effects of which were constantly before their Eyes, and therefore having filled up the Measure of their Iniquities, GOD made them an Example to others, since they would take no Warning themselves.

How much the true Religion prevail'd by these Dispensations of Providence among other Nations, besides the *Hebrews*, we have an illustrious Instance in *Job*, and his Friends, who were Princes and Prophets in their several Dominions; whence it appears, that Revelations were made to those Nations likewise, and that the Fundamentals of Religion were known to them. And there is no doubt but the Propagation of Religion in other Parts of the World would be as evident, if the Scripture had on set Purpose, and not occasionally only, treated of this Matter: As we may gather from the Footsteps to be found in several Heathen Authors of what the Scriptures deliver to us; and from the several Allusions and Representations in the Rites and Ceremonies of their Religions, expressing, tho' obscurely and confusedly, the chief Points of Scripture-Story, as has been shewn by many learned Men. Let us now consider what the Mosaic Dispensation contributed to the Reformation of the World, and how it went on in this Period.

I. With regard to the People of the *Jews* themselves, notwithstanding they were a rebellious People, a perverse and stubborn Generation,

tion, tho' not more so than their Neighbours, as I have shewn above, p. 105. yet they must have been very perverse, indeed, if all the Warnings given, Threats denounced against, and Judgments from Time to Time inflicted upon them, had not wrought some good Effects in them. Accordingly we find, that the severe Discipline they were under, cured them at last of their Proneness to Idolatry so effectually, that after their Return from the *Babylonish* Captivity, they never once revolted from the Worship of the true God, nor discover'd the least Inclination that way. On the contrary, they became zealous of their Law, even to Superstition, and grew so tenacious of their Religion, that many of them sacrificed their Lives in Defence of it.

Indeed, upon the Appearance of a more perfect Dispensation, this became their Fault, and continues so to this Day; but before, their Zeal for it was undoubtedly virtuous and commendable. The Character of the Law above-mention'd, that it was a *Schoolmaster*, implies Instruction; and some Benefit sure must have accrued to the Learners of it, especially as they were in succeeding Ages so diligent in the Study of it.

II. With regard to Mankind in general: Tho' the *Israelites*, by their Laws concerning Religion and Government, may seem to have been wholly separated from the rest of the World, and the divine Revelations to have been confined to one Nation, yet there still

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were

130 *Reformation of the World*

were sufficient Means, and frequent Opportunities for all Nations to come to the Knowledge of the Truth.

For tho' the Judicial and Ceremonial Laws were impracticable out of *Judea*, yet the most valuable Part of their Religion, the Knowledge of the true God, and the moral Law, were indifferent to all Parts of the World. And the Law of *Moses* did particularly provide for the Instruction of other Nations therein, and the Scripture gives frequent Command and Encouragement concerning it. Provision is made for admitting Strangers and Profelytes, who, in the very Design and Institution of the Law, were join'd with the native *Israelites* themselves, as to all the Rites and Privileges of religious Worship, in which they were invited to share.

And in Case they would not submit to become Converts to the whole Law, yet they were not rejected, but left to their Liberty, being under no Obligation, but to worship the true God, and observe the Precepts of *Noah*; which alone entitled them to partake of their Civil Privileges, and live under the Protection of their Government: In-
somuch, that it is observed, no Government had such particular Regard for Strangers, or was so peculiarly contrived for their Encouragement to live under it. Accordingly, Multitudes of Profelytes were made out of all Nations, the Providence of God so ordering and disposing of the *Jews* in all their Affairs,

as

as to afford other Nations frequent Opportunities of being instructed in the true Religion.

The miraculous Deliverance of the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, magnified the Power of GOD in all Countries, where the Report of an Event so wonderful and notorious came. And their various Successes in the Land of *Canaan*, not only their Victories, but Overthrows, and the miraculous Power of GOD visibly appearing either in their Defeat and Punishment, or in their Conquest and Deliverance, must needs raise a mighty Fame and Admiration of the GOD of *Israel*, in all those Countries. Their frequent Subjections by their Enemies, and Deliverances by the Worthies raised for that Purpose, must give great Occasion to all the bordering Nations to know and consider that Religion, the Observation or Neglect whereof had such visible Effects upon its Professors.

In the Reign of *David*, their Attention was raised still higher; for he extended his Conquests far and near, and *the Fame of him went out into all Lands, and the Lord brought the Fear of him upon all Nations.* 1 Chr. xiv. 17.

But in *Solomon's* Reign, the Kingdom of *Israel* became yet more famous and flourishing. Not only *Hiram*, King of *Tyre*, and the Queen of *Sheba*, but all the *Kings of the Earth sought to Solomon to hear his Wisdom.*

1 Kings iv. 34, x. 24. His Dominions were exceeding great — *He reign'd over all the*

132 *Reformation of the World*

Kings from the River (Euphrates) *even unto the Land of the Philistines, and to the Border of Egypt.* 2 Chr. ix. 26. The Trade and Correspondence of the *Israelites* with foreign Nations, was mightily advanced in his Time, and caused their Laws, and Customs, and Religion, to be much observed and enquired into. And the *Gentiles* were so forward to become Profelytes in these Reigns, that their Sincerity became suspected; and therefore a Stop was put to the publick Admission of them, tho' great Numbers were still receiv'd privately.

It is an Observation made by some of the Fathers, that God placed *Jerusalem* in the midst of the Nations, that it might be a Direction to the *Heathen* in Matters of Religion; from whence, as from the Centre, Light might be communicated to the circumjacent Regions.

But the Division and Calamities of the People of *Israel*, their Captivities and Dispersions, contributed as much to the Propagation of Religion, as their greatest Prosperity could do. The Captivity of the Ten Tribes, whereby they were distributed among some of the most distant Nations of the Earth, was the Means of conveying the Knowledge of the true God, whithersoever they went; as the Seventy Years Captivity of the two remaining Tribes in *Babylon*, made their Religion almost as well known there, as in *Jerusalem* itself. For the Almighty Power of God was ma-

manifested by Miracles, Prophecies, and Interpretation of Dreams; and his Majesty and Honour was proclaim'd in the most publick and solemn Manner throughout all the *Babylonian* Empire, at the Command of Princes, who were Idolaters, and were forced to it by the mere Convictions of their own Consciences, wrought in them by the irresistible Power of GOD, *Dan.* iii. 28, 29—vi. 26, 27. The Restoration of the *Jews* by *Cyrus*, who had been long before appointed and named by GOD himself for that Work, was ordain'd for this End, that they might *know from the Rising of the Sun, and from the West, that there was no GOD besides him.* *Isa.* xlv. 6. The Conquests of *Cyrus* open'd a great Correspondence between the Nations of the World, and his particular Favour to the *Jews*, made them much taken Notice of by other Nations.

The Victories of *Alexander* likewise made Way for a freer Communication between the several Parts of the Earth, to the Benefit of Mankind in the Improvement of all useful Knowledge; and he likewise granted the *Jews* several Privileges and Immunities. The same did several of his Successors, particularly *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, who among other Favours, caused the Holy Scriptures to be translated into the *Greek* Tongue, which was an exceeding great Furtherance to the Propagation of Religion.

In a Word, never had any other Nation such various Changes and Revolutions to mix

134 *Reformation of the World*

it with the rest of the World ; and never were any People so industrious, zealous, and successful in the Propagation of their Religion. They were dispersed over all the World, but they chiefly seated themselves in *Rome*, *Alexandria*, and *Antioch*, three of the most populous Cities in it. In *Egypt* they had a Temple ; and they had Synagogues in all the chief Cities of *Greece* and *Asia* where they dwelt.

By all these Means, and others too tedious to mention particularly*, vast Multitudes of Proselytes were made to the *Jewish* Religion in all Parts of the World, and thus mightily did it prevail, till such Time as it had its full Period and Accomplishment in, and was superseded by, the Gospel Dispensation.

From all which it appears, that notwithstanding the great Extent of *Heathenism*, the Worship of the true GOD, in every Age, gain'd Ground upon it, even before the Appearance of Christianity ; and, tho' it was at first but like a *Grain of Mustard Seed*, sown in one Family, yet by the Providence of GOD, it increased to that Degree, that it became like a great Tree, the Birds of the Air lodging in its Branches.

Add to this, that where the true Religion was not professedly embraced, yet it was by many secretly admired and imitated : This appears from the many Memorials and Remem-

* If the Reader has a Mind to examine this Matter more particularly, I refer him to Dr *Jenkins's Reasonableness of Christianity*, Vol. 1. Part 2d. ch. 2. from whence this Account is mostly extracted.

membrances of it to be traced among the *Heathen*. Thus the Knowledge which they had of the *God Jehovah*, and several other religious Notions, Scripture-Histories, Institutions, Rites, Customs, which they adopted into their own Religions, they could not have had any other Way, than as they learn'd and borrow'd them from the *Hebrews*; by which Means false Religions were in some Measure refined from their Corruptions, and by Degrees improved, by the true, tho' they were not overcome by it.

This is particularly observable of the *Magian* Religion; which, as it was reformed by *Zoroastres*, appears to have been framed after the *Jewish Model*, most of its Doctrines and Customs being manifestly taken from the Sacred Writings and Usages of the *Jews*: And the *Magians* themselves, in a manner, own as much, by their claiming *Abraham* as the Founder of their Religion; and indeed the *Sabians*, *Indians*, and *Mahometans*, likewise pretend the same.†

In like Manner the Laws of the wisest *Heathen* Nations were taken from the Laws of *Moses*, and the Philosophers too had generally some Knowledge of the Religion of the *Hebrews*; and perhaps the best and soundest Part of their Learning and Philosophy was derived from the same Fountain, as it is with great Probability supposed, notwithstanding what some allege to the contrary, that the

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† See *Prideaux Connection*, Part 1. B. 4.

136 *Reformation of the World*

true Atomical or Mechanical Philosophy was invented by *Moses*, who is the same with *Moschus* the *Phanician*, to whom it is ascribed.*

And it is the Opinion of several learned Men, that *Moses* alone, in his short History of the Creation, hath taught more than all the other Interpreters of Nature; and that this is the Fountain from which all our real Knowledge of it is derived.

Moreover, GOD made use of other Means to declare his Glory to the *Heathen*, his *marvellous Works among all Nations*. For he raised up his Prophets as well among them, as his own People, and Miracles were sometimes wrought among them by invoking the true GOD: And by many other wonderful and inscrutable Methods of Providence, they were disposed and prepared for the Reception of the Saviour of the World; whose Coming had, either by the *Sibylline Oracles*, or other prophetic Notices (which it is not material to examine,) been, without doubt, sufficiently made known among them. For it appears from *Tacitus* and *Virgil*, that the whole World, about the Time of the Birth of Christ, was big with Expectations of the Appearance of some extraordinary Person, for the general Good of Mankind.

Indeed, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, were not only taught to expect a Redeemer, but the
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* The Reader may see this proved to his Satisfaction, by Dr *Cudworth*, on *Morality*, p. 56. notwithstanding what is alledged by Dr *Burnet* and Mr *Warburton* to the contrary, who ascribe this Hypothesis to *Democritus* and *Leucippus*.

sober and considerate among both, were by this Time convinced of the Necessity of one. Each of them knew enough to be sensible of the Misery of their Condition, but neither of them knew how to help it. They were convinced of their Blindness and Ignorance, and of the Depravity of their Nature; and moreover of their utter Inability to remove the one and rectify the other. This the wiser *Heathens* saw and lamented; their own Experience had convinced them of the Absurdity of their several Systems of Religion, which Virtue made no Part of; and tho' Morality was taught among them, yet was it very imperfect and inefficacious, as it wanted the Authority, Certainty, Obligation, and Sanctions of a Law. They were no less sensible of the Vanity of their Philosophy, and Insufficiency of mere natural Reason; tho' it seemed now to be arrived at as high a Pitch of Perfection, as mere natural Reason could arrive at. Tho' they sought all Helps and Means, that were to be had, to improve it, yet they found all was too little; no Assistance less than supernatural being sufficient to remove those Clouds of Ignorance and Error, in which their Minds were involved. This several of them were sensible of, and panted after. None of their Sects of Philosophy could frame any certain Conclusions; all their Knowledge amounted only to Opinion; and all their Researches ended in Scepticism. Accordingly, some of them confessed, that all they knew was, that they
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138 *Reformation of the World*

knew nothing; and the Reason why *Socrates* was pronounced the wisest Man by the Oracle, was, because he had the Ingenuity to own his Ignorance.

Nor was this an inconsiderable Step towards an Amendment of our Natures, it being necessary in order to a Cure, to be first sensible of the Need of it.

Neither could they who lived under the Law, obtain Justification by it, any more than those who lived without it: Its chief Use was to convince them of its own Insufficiency, *to make the Comers thereunto perfect*, Heb. x. 1. as well as of their Insufficiency to perform it, and by that Means to make them betake themselves to Faith in the *Messiah*, and build their Hopes on him, whose All-sufficiency was alone able to make up all Defects both in their Law, and in their Obedience to it, and in Time to provide an effectual Remedy for both.

Providence having, by a long Course of Preparatives, brought Mankind at last to a due Sense and Feeling of their Condition, which was no inconsiderable Point gain'd; and the human Nature being, in other Respects, reduced to a fit Habit and Disposition, and its Distemper being arrived at its proper Crisis for the Application of more direct and powerful Remedies—*The Fulness of Time being now come, the Sun of Righteousness arises with Healing in his Wings.* The great Physician of Souls appears in Person, and prescribes his
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universal Remedy, which suits every Case, is sufficient to rectify every Disorder, and is to be the great Restorative of our Nature, of which Truth I shall hereafter give distinct, and I hope, convincing Proofs.

And in order to it, I am at present to shew, in Prosecution of the Argument I am upon, how much the World hath been better'd already by the Propagation of the Gospel: Wherein I shall be the more brief, because the Reader may probably think I have been too tedious on this Head already.

C H A P. VII.

Concerning the Reformation wrought in the World by means of Chri- stianity.

TH E speedy Propagation of the Gospel throughout the whole World is a Fact so well known and uncontested, that the Notoreity of its great Success made it to be esteemed miraculous; so that it is needless to trouble the Reader with an historical Account of it.

Our Saviour Christ foretold, that *the Gospel of his Kingdom should be preached in all the World before that Generation should pass.* Matt. xxiv. 14, 34. And the Accounts which are left us of the Travels of the Apostles, and of the several Nations converted by them, together with the Footsteps of Christianity which may still be traced among the most distant and barbarous People of the World, who at present enjoy least of the Light of the Gospel, leave us no Room to doubt of the Accomplishment of this Prediction.

It must, indeed, be owned and lamented, that our most holy Religion, however universally it was diffused and propagated, yet in succeeding Ages lost much Ground, by the Encroachments of false Religions,
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Reformation by the Gospel. 141

and much of its Influence on Men's Lives by the Corruptions, which by degrees crept into it : Infomuch that at present it is computed to possess not above one sixth part * of the World. And out of that, if we deduct such of its Professors as are not better'd by it in their Lives, the Number will be considerably less'n'd.

Now admitting the above Calculation to be as near the Truth as Things of that Nature can be supposed to be, I desire it may be considered,

I. That tho' the Extent and Influence of Christianity may appear to be but comparatively small in Proportion to the whole World ; yet if we either consider it in itself, or compare it with the Jewish Religion, which, before Christianity was grafted upon it, was the Religion made use of by Providence for the Reformation of the World, we shall not in either of these Views think it so much straitned in its Bounds. True Religion, which at first was confined to one Family, and afterwards to one Nation and Corner of the World, has since by degrees so enlarged its Empire, as to be possess'd of vast Kingdoms and Territories, and is the establish'd Religion in many Countries throughout the known World ; besides those which it shares with

* This is the Computation of *Brerewood* in his *Enquiries into the Diversity of Languages* Ch. xiv. p. 203. Where he says, ' If we divide the known Countries of the World into thirty equal Parts, five of them are *Christian*, six *Mahometan*, and " nineteen *Pagan*.

142 *Reformation of the World*

with other Religions, where it is only tolerated; and still it is but in its Growth and Progress, in its Infancy, indeed, with regard to what we are assured the future Extent of it will be, as I shall shew hereafter. So fitly is the Kingdom of Heaven liken'd by our Saviour to a *Grain of Mustard-seed, which is one of the least of Seeds; but when it is sown and groweth up, it shooteth out great Branches, so that the Birds of the Air may come and lodge under the Shadow of it.* Mark iv. 31, 32.

II. It is owing to the great Providence of GOD, that the Gospel hath stood its Ground so well as it hath done, since nothing less than his especial Care and Protection could have preserved it against the Opposition it hath met with, as well from the obstinate Lusts and perverse Tempers of Men, as from the malicious Efforts of Satan, who hath never ceased to stir up Enemies against it, and distress it by all the means his subtile Malice could invent. *

There have been *many Antichrists* from the Beginning. 1 *Jo.* ii. 18. many still continue, and one reigns more eminently so, and is in Scripture particularly described and distinguished from the rest. Tho' there are two such fair Competitors for that Title, that it has been matter of Dispute, and is still undetermined, which deserves it best. So powerful are the Enemies of the Christian Cause! And,
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* See p. 110. &c.

indeed, it is not easy to say whether Christianity hath suffer'd most from the Impostures of the *false Prophet*, or of the *false Apostle*, who blasphemously stiles himself the *Vicar of Christ*—Whether the Arms of *Mahomet* have made greater Havock of the eastern Churches—Or whether the Tyranny and Ufurpation, the Idolatries and Sorceries of the Church of *Rome*, have not of the two done greater Mischief to Christianity in these Western parts of the World, and indeed all the World over. Therefore to compromise the matter, learned Men have split the Difference, and made them both distinct Branches of Antichrist. *

The Sun of Righteousness, as well as the Sun in the Firmament, is sometimes eclipsed and under a Cloud: Satan hath his Time of Enlargement, and the *Powers of Darkness* have their *Season*, Luke xxii. 53. which their wicked Industry ceaseth not to improve for the Advancement of their Kingdom. The old Serpent is fruitful in his Devices to counterplot every Scheme and Dispensation of Providence for the Recovery of fallen Man. And tho' after such long Experience Man is not *ignorant of his Devices*, yet he still listens too much to them, otherwise they would not be so successful. The Preacher tells us, *That GOD hath made Man upright, but that they have sought out many Inventions.* Eccles. vii. 29. And so infatuated it seems are they with

* See *Prideaux, Life of Mahomet* p. 16.

144 *Reformation of the World*

with the Inventions, which, by Satan's Suggestions, they have found out, that they will not be wean'd from them, till they have run the whole Round of his delusive Tricks and Stratagems, are quite tired with the fruitless Chase he leads them, and have made full Tryal of the Vanity and Folly of them.

When they have been led thro' all the Mazes and Labyrinths of Error, they will at length find the direct Road of Truth. It is not sufficient, that they have merely tasted of the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil* to distinguish that which is the more eligible, but they must be quite satiated and nauseated with the latter, before they will unanimously be brought to embrace the former in the Love of it. Knowledge and Ignorance, like Day and Night, must for a Time have their Vicissitudes; and like Light and Shade, the one serves to set off the other. And when human Nature hath been tired with vibrating from the one Extreme to the other, it will at length find its Center and fix in it.

Ignorance and Error seem to have arrived at their full Height, in those, which are, therefore, deservedly call'd, the *dark Ages*: And the Devil seems to have exerted his Master-piece of Policy to introduce and establish them in a part of the World, whence they seem'd to have been once effectually banished, and which seem'd most secure against their Return.

For this purpose he stirred up the barbarous

fous Northern Nations, who over-running *Europe* in the fifth and sixth Centuries,—and the Churches of *Asia* soon after losing their Candlestick by reason of their Heresies and Schisms, and being subjected to the Ravages and Impositions of *Mahomet*, both together made such a total Devastation of all Sorts of Learning, human and divine, as if they had acted by Concert to root all Knowledge out of the World. *

During this Night of *Egyptian* Darkness, of *Darkness*, such as might be felt, while *Men slept*; then it was that the Enemy took his Opportunity of sowing *Tares among the Wheat*. Then Errors crept in apace; Superstition the Child of Ignorance was brought forth: The Devil revived his Pagan Idolatries and grafted them upon Christianity †; and then *the Man of Sin was reveal'd, the Son of Perdition*. 2 Th. ii. 3, 4.

Serious Persons therefore have undoubtedly been often perplex'd to account for the Permission of so monstrous and universal a Corruption and Perversion, under which true Religion for so long a Time groan'd. With regard to which, let it be observed.

III. That as the Christian Life is in Scripture represented as a Warfare, so it is no Wonder if Mankind are sometimes foil'd and worsted in it; and considering what powerful Enemies they

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have

* See a Remark of *Dr Prideaux* to this purpose, *ubi supra*.

† See *Dr Jackson's Works* Vol. i p. 933. and *Dr Myddleton's Letter from Rome*.

146 *Reformation of the World*

have to engage with, it is well if they come off victorious in the End. It cannot be otherwise expected than that human Nature in its Endeavours to recover from its Fall, should meet with frequent Relapses; which may be attended with this good Effect, to put them upon exerting themselves with greater Vigour to maintain their Ground better for the future. The Way to Perfection is steep and arduous, and Man ascends it with Difficulty: When he has advanced a little Way he makes a false Step, and is borne down again, and it costs him much Pains and Labour to regain the Ground he had lost. We are as yet got but a little way up the Hill: We have had many Hindrances, and many more we must expect to meet with before we gain the Summit of it. Moreover, as *God's Judgments are unsearchable, and his Ways past finding out*, we are very incompetent Judges what Disposition of Things in all Circumstances, is best to perfect Nature. As nothing happens in the World but by his Appointment or Permission, and as he has wise Ends and Purposes to serve by every Thing that doth happen; so we may assuredly conclude he had in this; however inexplicable it may appear to us. Human Nature, it should seem required such a Discipline, and true Religion was reduced to this low and distress'd Condition, that it might rise out of it more glorious and flourishing: It was put into this Furnace to be refined and purified; and having purged it-

itself of its Corruptions, it will better guard against them, and preserve itself the freer from them for the Future. For the Popish Tyranny on the one Hand, and the *Turks* and *Saracens* on the other, were the Scourges of Christendom, and continue too much so still, wherewith God was pleased to chastise it for its Sins; Who in this as well as in other respects makes use of the Ministry of wicked Men and Devils in the Government of his Church. * Accordingly,

IV. As the divine Wisdom often brings Good out of Evil, so here our Saviour *Christ* serves himself of his grand Adversary *Anti-christ*; and the *Man of Sin*, whilst he notoriously perverts the Gospel, helps indeed to confirm it, by fulfilling the many Prophecies concerning him, and by that means affording a standing Evidence of the Truth of the Scriptures, and of the Religion contained in them.

The Prophet *Daniel* foretels a tyrannical Power who *had a Mouth speaking great Things, and a Look more stout than his Fellows*, Ch. vii. 8, 20. and who should *make War with the Saints and prevail against them*. v. 21. 25. *He shall speak great Words against the most High, and shall wear out the Saints of the most High, and think to change Times and Laws; and they shall be given into his Hand, until a Time, and Times, and the dividing of Time*—Concerning the same Power St Paul speaks, when he says,

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* See Scott's Christian Life. Vol. iii. p. 347.

148 *Reformation of the World*

the Man of Sin shall be revealed, the Son of Perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called GOD, or worshipped; so that he, as GOD, sitteth in the Temple of GOD, shewing himself that he is GOD; whose Coming is after the Working of Satan, with all Power and Signs, and lying Wonders, and with all Deceivableness of Unrighteousness. 2 Thes. ii. 3, 4, 9, 10. St John likewise prophesieth of this tyrannical Power, to whom was given great Authority, and a Mouth speaking great Things and Blasphemies—And it was given to him to make War with the Saints, and to overcome them: And Power was given him over all Kindreds and Tongues, and Nations; and all that dwell upon the Earth shall worship him. Rev. xiii. 5, 6, &c. Ch. xvii. 13, 17. Kings shall give their Power and Strength unto the Beast; for GOD hath put in their Hearts to fulfill his Will, and to agree and give their Kingdom unto the Beast. And the Name of this Power is, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth, with whom the Kings of the Earth have committed Fornication. And the Seat of its Power is said to be in that great City which standeth upon seven Mountains. v. 9, 18.

Now, as there was not any Footstep of such a sort of Power as is above described, in the World, at the Time in which either of the fore-cited Writers prophesied concerning it—As there never had been any such Power

in the World before, neither was there then any Appearance of Probability, that could make it enter into the Heart of Man to imagine, that there ever could be any such kind of Power in the World, much less in the Temple, or Church of God. 2 Thes. ii. 4—Notwithstanding all this, as there is now such a Power actually and conspicuously exercised in the World—And as no Picture of this Power drawn after the Event, can now describe it more plainly and exactly than it was originally described in the Words of the fore-cited Prophecies*—This must be a most convincing Proof of the Authority and divine Original of that Book in which these Prophecies are contain'd, and likewise of the Truth of that Religion which it recommends; and such as ought to awaken Unbelievers of all sorts to the serious Consideration of it. But chiefly are they concern'd to weigh this matter well, *who have received the Mark of the Beast and worship him.* Rev. xiii. 12, 16; whom nothing could hinder to see and renounce their Errors, but that judicial Blindness and Infatuation foretold of them 2 Thes. ii. 10, 11. *that because they received not the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved, God should send them strong Delusion, that they should believe a Lye; or rather as some translate, τὸ ψεύδει, the Lye, the Grand Imposture.*

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Again,

* See Dr Clarke's Discourse on the Connection of Prophecies annexed to his Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God.

150 *Reformation of the World*

Again, both *Daniel* and *St John* foretell the Continuance of this tyrannical Power for such a determinate Period of Time. Thus the former says it shall be *for a Time, Times, and dividing of Time*. Ch. vii. 25. and again, *for a Time, Times, and a Half*. Ch. xii. 7. *St John* likewise prophesies of it in the same Words, *That it shall be for a Time, and Times, and half a Time*. Rev. xii. 14. *for forty and two Months* Ch. xiii. 5. xi. 2.—*for 1260 Days*. Ch. xi. 3. xii. 6. All which occult Numbers, in the prophetical Language, differ only in the Manner of Expression, and coincide in one and the same Period of 1260 Years.

Now when the Power of *Antichrist* shall be destroyed at the End of this Period, which by the Description of it, *Dan.* vii. 11. *Rev.* xviii. will be effected by some very terrible and signal Judgments—Such a remarkable Accomplishment of so many antient direct Prophecies must be a new and mighty Proof of the Truth of Christianity, and be the means of converting many to the Faith; especially when in Consequence of it, the Church shall be cleansed from the Profanations and Pollutions of *Antichrist*. Accordingly we find, that immediately after the Account of his Destruction in *Dan.* vii. 12, 13, 14. follows a Description of the Kingdom of the Son of Man, whom *all People, Nations, and Languages* should serve, and v. 27. *all Dominions shall serve and obey him*. And in *Rev.* xix. after the
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by means of the Gospel. 151

the Judgement of the great Whore, follows the Marriage of the Lamb. In the mean Time, as the former kind of Prophecies, I mean those that concern the Coming and Being of *Antichrist*, have been so literally fulfill'd, we have the less Reason to doubt the Accomplishment of those that foretell his Destruction. And this the State of Religion since the Reformation, whereby his Power has not been a little weaken'd, gives us the greatest Encouragement to hope. For,

V. The Christian World, by long and woeful Experience, being at length made sensible of the Tyranny and Usurpations of the Church of *Rome*, a great Part of it thought it high time to throw off its Yoke, and purge itself from its Errors and Corruptions, whereby they at once obey'd the Voice and accomplish'd the Prophecy. *Rev. viii. 4. Come out of her, my People, that ye be not Partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues.* This glorious Work was successfully carried on and completed by the Zeal and Labours of pious and learned Men, who from Time to Time solidly confuted the Errors of *Pope-ry*, and at length established the *Protestant* Faith upon such a Foundation, as we trust *the Gates of Hell shall no more prevail against it, viz. upon the Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone.* By these means the Christian Religion in Protestant Countries is come to be as purely profess'd as in the Apo-

150 *Reformation of the World*

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152 *Reformation of the World*

stolical Age ; and if its Precepts are not so well obey'd, its Doctrines are better and more clearly explain'd, and more extensively and explicitly understood, than they have been ever since.

I am not going to write a Panegyrick on the present Times, nor a Satyr on any that are past ; and I hope no Prejudice in favour of my own way of thinking will carry me beyond the Bounds of Truth: This I think I may venture to say, without Injury to it, that the *two last* Centuries of Christianity, I mean, as far as the Reformation extended, have exceeded all that went before them, excepting, in some respects, the *three first*. With regard to these it must be confessed, that the primitive Christians were so eminent for their Zeal, Piety, and Christian Fortitude, and many other Graces, that they do not admit of any Parallel: They that come next to them were the first Reformers, as in their Circumstances likewise they resembled them most. But this is to be observed of both, that their Virtue was such as required the Discipline of Persecution, which had not befallen them if they had not needed Correction, and could have borne the Temptations of a prosperous State. The Power of Christianity was exemplified in the Lives of its first Professors, that they might stand as Patterns for Christians in succeeding Ages, and teach them by Example how great the Efficacy of the Christian Religion was for the Reformation of
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of Mankind. But on the other Hand, it may be said, that Christians in these latter Ages surpass them as much in Knowledge, as they fall short of them in Zeal and Holiness of Life.

This must necessarily be the Case: Because the Knowledge of Christianity in its full Extent is not any more than that of other Sciences, to be attain'd at once: The Scriptures, in which *are many Things hard to be understood*, require long Search and Study; and all the Doctrines interspersed in them could not be fully collected and deduced from them by any human Industry, within the Compass of two or three Ages; and such is *the Mystery of Godliness*, that even still many Things are hid in it, which are left for the Discovery of future Generations.

Therefore the Knowledge of the first Christians could ordinarily be but of small Extent: Their Belief was very simple and implicit; and upon their Admission into the Church by Baptism, it consisted of no more than one Article, *viz. That Jesus was the Messiah*: And it was not enlarged but by Degrees, as Occasion required by the springing up of Heresies; in order to guard against which, Additions were from time to time made to it; and several Centuries pass'd before the Whole of what is called the *Apostle's Creed* was framed and received into the Church. * Hence arose the Necessity of the Per-

* See King's Critical History of the Creed.

154 *Reformation of the World*

Permission of Heresies, * *viz.* to excite well-meaning Christians to the Investigation of the Truth. If there had been none to oppose sound Doctrine, there had not been Occasion for any to defend it; the Consequence of which had been, that we had not known what sound Doctrine meant, the Study of the Scriptures had been neglected, and Christians had been ignorant of the first Principles of their Religion.

But as every part of Reveal'd Religion hath at one time or other been disputed and canvass'd, it may be truly said, that by these means Christianity is at this Day better understood, and more fully comprehended than ever it was before, or had been otherwise. *Ante exortum Pelagium securius loquebantur Patres*, is an Observation of St *Austin's*. And the same may be extended to heterodox Persons in general, whose Opinions gave Occasion to a more diligent Discussion, and accurate Decision of the Truth, as well as to the Discovery of several particular Truths, which till then lay conceal'd or neglected.

It were invidious to make Comparisons between the Antients and Moderns in this Case. The Fathers of the Church were great Men for the Times they lived in; but they had their Defects and Disadvantages; nor ought it to be thought any Disparagement to them, that they have taught our modern Divines a more judicious Knowledge of the Doctrines of Chri-

* 1 Cor. xi. 9.

Christianity, than they had themselves. On the contrary, it were strange if the latter, as they have got the Advantage of Ground, could not see a little farther than the former.

Some People have a superstitious Veneration for Antiquity, and are strangely prejudiced against their own Times. I hope I have a due Regard for primitive Christianity, nor am I so fond an Admirer of the Manners of the present Age, as to palliate its reigning Vices, how well soever I think of it in other respects. GOD knows we need look but little abroad into the World to find abundant Matter of Lamentation, nor is the is honest Zeal of well-meaning Persons against the Iniquity of the Times, which makes them think worse of them, than of those in which they are not so nearly concern'd, by any means to be discouraged.

But on the other Hand, the first and purest Ages of the Gospel have not been without their Corruptions and Heresies, and those more monstrous and abominable than any the Church is at present infested with, tho' too many Doctrines are daily broach'd and maintain'd, which are no less opposite to and destructive of true Religion, and which therefore ought to be abhorr'd by all well Wishers to it. We know what early Abuses crept into the Church of *Corinth*, and other more detestable Errors and Corruptions sprang up and spread, even in Despight and Defiance of Apostolical Authority and Endeavours to suppress them. There are no Sects of Christians now in Being, who

156 *Reformation of the World.*

who do not hold Morality to be an essential Part of Religion ; whereas the *Nicolaitans* and *Gnosticks*, and many other Heresies of old which sprang from them, professed and practised several sorts of Impurities too offensive for the Ears of Christians now a days, and that even in the Performance of their religious Services. *Epiphanius*, whoever has the Curiosity to consult him, is very particular in the Description of their Bestialities.

Indeed there were few Opinions of the ancient Hereticks, that have not been revived in these latter Ages ; but then they have either presently died away, and no more hath been heard of them ; or else they have been so refined, as if not to be reconciled, yet to be brought nearer to *the Truth, as it is in Christ Jesus* ; whereby it is to be hoped they are in the Way of being reconciled to it.

Even *Popery* itself begins to be ashamed of some of its grosser Errors, and its Divines of late have been forced to explain them in a manner more agreeable to Truth and Scripture. Moreover, that persecuting Spirit, which was the Reproach and Scandal of Christians is, GOD be praised, in a good Measure abated among all Sorts and Denominations of them ; and we do not now hear so much of Christians being burnt and tortured by Christians. Nor do Papists at present seem to thirst so much after Protestant Blood, tho' there is Reason to suspect that they still retain too much of the old Leaven, durst they
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suffer it to work out. It is observed likewise that there is not that Ignorance and Immorality to be objected against Papists now as formerly; Learning being no less propagated among them than Protestants: Many good and pious Books are published by their Clergy; nor are they so scandalous in their Lives as in the Ages preceding the Reformation, but they in general are exemplary in their Behaviour, and afford us Patterns in some Things which we might profit by.

On the other Hand, there is not that Acrimony and Virulence in the controversial Writings of Protestants, for which some of the first Reformers are justly condemn'd, and which indeed have always had too great a Share in religious Disputes; tho', I think it may be said, in Honour of the present Age, that Controversy is carried on with more Decency and good Manners, than in any former Period of Time that can be named: Which, together with the Toleration granted by Law, in this and other Protestant Countries, for all Persons to worship God in their own Way; and that *Christian* Charity and Moderation, which is generally shewn towards those that differ from us, seems already to be attended with good Effect; and if continued and improved, will not fail in Time to promote an Union of Sentiments and Affections among Christians. And when the Members of Christ's Body are united among themselves, they will of course be better united unto him their Head,

158 *Reformation of the World*

Head, in their common Faith, and in all good Works. When this once comes to pass—when Christianity shines forth in the Lives of its Professors, and their Practice is brought to a Conformity with their Profession—then, and not till then, we may hope the Borders of our *Sion* will be enlarged; *Jews*, *Turks*, and *Infidels* will no longer suspect the Sincerity of *Christians*, nor be blind to the Excellency of their Religion, when it shall shine forth with so much Lustre—Then will be brought about an universal Reformation, at present wish'd for in vain; and then we shall be *all one Fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ the Righteous*.

To what has been already observed, may be added, that the setting up of so many Charity-Schools, as have of late Years been erected in these Kingdoms—the forming of religious Societies, and other good Means, have greatly contributed to the promoting of the Knowledge and Practice of Virtue and Religion among us.

Notwithstanding, it has been made a Question, whether the World has been really better'd by Christianity, where it has prevail'd; and it has been objected—That the antient *Heathens* were more eminent for their Virtue than the generality of *Christians*: The *Mahometans* are extoll'd above them for their Justice, Veracity and other moral Virtues—The *Chinese*, for the Exercise of the Relative Duties, and the Severity of their Discipline in general—And even the wild *Indians*

ans, for the Simplicity and Integrity of their Lives.

I shall begin with a general Answer to this Objection. Now, in order to know what Good Christianity hath done in the World, with Regard to the Lives and Morals of Men, we ought to be well acquainted with the State of the World, before its Appearance in it. But as at this Distance of Time we can at best have but a very imperfect Knowledge of former Ages, this Objection is in a great Measure founded in Ignorance, and for the same Reason the Answer to it must be so far deficient likewise. However, we learn from the Apologies for Christianity, that there became such a visible Alteration in the Tempers and Lives of Men, upon their Conversion to it, that they seem'd to have changed their very Natures, and to be born again, and become new Creatures; whence Conversion appears to be fitly stiled *Regeneration*. The *whole World then lay in Wickedness*, as St *John* testifies. 1 *John* v. 19. which Christianity, wherever it prevail'd, effectually purged it from.

‘ Not to insist upon the exalted Degrees of
‘ Purity and Perfection, to which Christianity
‘ raised so many of its first Professors—Let us
‘ take a View of it, not as it was embraced
‘ by single Persons or Families, but as it be-
‘ came the received Religion of whole Coun-
‘ tries, and see what Effects it had among
‘ them. And it is universally true, that wher-
‘ ever Christianity prevail'd, Oracles ceased,
‘ Idols

160 *Reformation of the World*

' Idols were destroy'd, and the Worship of the
' true God establish'd.

' And whereas the *Heathen* Worship consisted of the Sacrifices of Beasts and Men, and was accompanied with many foolish, cruel, and impure Rites; Christianity banish'd all these, and wherever it was received, did establish a Worship suitable to the pure and spiritual Nature of God. And there is no Christian Country wherein this reasonable Service is not solemnly perform'd by Ministers, and attended by the People; to which, and to the Instructions and Exhortations of Christian Preachers, it is to be ascribed, that the Knowledge of the true God, and the Duty we owe him, is preserved to such a Degree, upon the Minds of the generality of People. And that several Vices, which were not only practis'd, but publicly allowed in the Times of *Heathenism*, are scarce known, and never named without Abhorrence in Christian Countries. Nor can it be said, with any Colour of Reason or Truth, that the general Order, Regularity, and Sense of Duty, which is found in Christian Countries at this Day, compared with the Cruelties, Disorders, and Excesses of all Kinds, that are generally practis'd in *Heathen* Nations, is not owing to the Christian Institution and Worship, and to the Certainty of future Rewards and Punishments, which Christ brought to Light; the Sense of which is preserv'd

‘ serv’d upon the Minds of the People by such
‘ publick Teaching.

‘ And tho’, so great is the Corruption of
‘ human Nature, that notwithstanding those
‘ Means of Instruction, and those Restraints
‘ from Wickedness, many Disorders and Ex-
‘ cesses are practis’d in Christian Countries; it
‘ is sufficient to our present Purpose—That if
‘ those Means and Restraints were removed, the
‘ Excesses would evidently be far greater and
‘ more general than they are—That the Com-
‘ mission of them among Christians is by far less
‘ frequent, and is attended with more Caution
‘ and Shame than among *Heathens*—And that
‘ besides those general Influences of Christiani-
‘ ty, such Excesses are in some Measure ba-
‘ lanced by the extraordinary Degrees of Piety,
‘ Purity, and Exactness of Life and Manners,
‘ which are observed by Multitudes of Peo-
‘ ple in every Christian Country*.

Nor has Christianity been thus beneficial to
those only that embraced it, but likewise to
the unconverted World. The first Christi-
ans proved to be what our Saviour call’d
them, *the Salt of the Earth*, to purify it from
its Corruptions; and the *Light of the World*,
to guide and direct others in the Ways of Vir-
tue: For by their Example and Doctrine,
they soon made a considerable Reformation,
even in the *Heathen* World.

Morality was taught by the Philosophers in
much greater Perfection than ever it had been

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before

* Bishop of London’s second *Pastoral Letter*. p. 36, 37.

162 *Reformation of the World*

before, and they became so much ashamed of the Grossness of their Idolatrous Worship, that they sought out all Arts to refine and excuse it; and those Vices which made up so great a Part of their Mysteries, appear'd too abominable to pass any longer for Religion. The Immortality of the Soul, and a future State of Rewards and Punishments, which at best amounted to no more than a Suspicion and Doubt, before they were brought to Light by the Gospel, have since been the Belief of *Heathens* as well as *Christians*; and there is scarcely a Nation upon Earth so barbarous, as to be without some Apprehensions of it. To the Light which our Saviour brought into the World, is to be ascribed the Belief of one God, which the *Mahometan* Religion hath derived and borrowed from it; and which is professed likewise by some of the most ignorant of the modern *Pagans*, tho' this great Truth was generally unknown to the most enlighten'd *Pagans* of Antiquity.

Moreover, as all the World, the *Jews* only excepted, were under the Impositions and Tyranny of the Devil (which God grant we may ever be ignorant of, nor feel what it is to be under absolute Subjection to him) *Christianity* had this good Effect, that it rescued Mankind from that Bondage, and made the Powers of Darkness to flee before it, as Darkness itself doth at the Approach of Light. It every where silenced their lying Oracles; dispossest Men of evil Spirits, which, till then,

then, had a Power of entring their Bodies, and most unmercifully tortured and plagued them; and it likewise spoil'd, and in a great Measure, destroy'd that wicked Trade and Commerce which was carried on between this World, and that of infernal Spirits, by Sorceries, Witchcrafts, Magic, and such like hellish Arts. In these several Respects, the Power of Satan was manifestly destroy'd throughout the whole World, by the preaching of the Gospel in all Nations; and that so effectually, that he never durst revive it again, in any considerable Degree, not even where he found Means to re-establish his Worship. Well, therefore, might our Saviour say, *that he saw Satan, like Lightning, fall from Heaven.* Luke x. 18. And such Good hath *Christianity* done, even in Nations that are still *Heathen*! For it is observable, that there are such small Remains of the Power of the Devil, in either of the above-mention'd Respects, now in the World, that People begin to disbelieve there ever hath been any such Thing. Thus some resolve the *Heathen* Oracles into Priestcraft: Others will believe nothing concerning Witches and Apparitions: And others again contend that there never were any Persons possess'd with evil Spirits.*

To come now to the Particulars contain'd in the Objection—It is far from being true in Fact, that the Lives of either *Heathens*, antient or modern, or of *Mahometans*, exceed

* See a late Controversy about *Demoniacs*.

164 *Reformation of the World*

those of the Generality of *Christians*. On the contrary, the antient *Heathens*, even the gravest of their Philosophers, held many Principles destructive of Virtue, and maintain'd Practices of a very vile and corrupt Nature. The *Chinese* are the most infatuated Idolaters, and the greatest and most avowed Cheats in the World: And Lust, Arrogance, Covetousness, Deceit, and the most exquisite Hypocrisy, complete the Character of a *Turk*. For a more particular Account of the Manners of all three, I refer the Reader to the *Cure of Deism*, Vol. I. P. 108, &c.

With Regard to the Natives of *America*, and the Inhabitants of several other Parts of the World, mention'd by Travellers, as their Innocence proceeds from their Simplicity, it is not so much a Virtue in them, as an Ignorance of Vice: They owe it more to Accident than Choice, and therefore it is not properly Innocence, but an Incapacity of Guilt, which are widely different from each other. Having tasted but sparingly of the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*, they are equally unacquainted with both, and are no more to be praised for their Ignorance of the one, than they are to be blamed for that of the other. The Question, with regard to such People as these, should be, whether, if the Gospel prevail'd among them, it would not improve their Morals, and exalt their Virtue? and this no one, I suppose, will be so hardy as to deny. It would at least have this good Effect, that it would

would cause them to lay aside those barbarous and cruel Rites, which have obtained more or less in the Religion of all *Heathen Nations**; and teach them a more innocent, as well as rational Kind of Worship. But, supposing these uncultivated People enjoy'd all the Plenty, Wealth, and Affluence of politer Nations, and were expos'd to all the Incentives to Luxury, Ambition, &c. from which their present Circumstances secure them—The Enquiry then would be, 1. Whether they would not be as likely to be overcome by them, as *European Christians* are, and run into as great, not to say greater, Excesses of Vice? 2. Whether, if they embraced *Christianity*, it would not furnish them with some Helps to enable them to withstand the Temptations of the World, the Flesh and the Devil, which otherwise they would be quite destitute of, and therefore more liable to be overcome by them? And that the *Christian* Religion would be equally serviceable to the *Turks* and *Chinese*, &c. should they embrace it, I fancy will not be denied, there being so much Room for their Improvement by it.

I hope, therefore, it will be allowed, that the World is actually grown much better and wiser by Means of reveal'd Religion, and particularly of the *Christian*, in those Countries,

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where

* Concerning the Corruptions in the Worship, Doctrine, and Practice of the present *Heathen* World, See Bishop of London's second *Pastoral Letter*. p. 33.

166 *Reformation of the World*

where it hath been received, and even in those where it hath not.

I shall now, according to my Method, add a few general Observations on the State of the World in its civil Capacity to shew how one Generation has refined upon another, and every Age has generally added something to the foregoing, in useful Inventions or Improvements, in order to procure the Necessaries and Conveniencies of Life; to advance or adorn it; and to render it comfortable, easy, and happy. For these, as I have observed, are the natural Means of removing the Curse,

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

Containing some general Observations on the Improvement of the World in its Civil Capacity.

THAT Man, whose chief, and almost only Business in Life, is to promote his own Welfare in it, and who is so active and industrious in this respect should, notwithstanding, prove so dull and stupid a Creature, not to gain any Thing by Experience, the great Mistress of the World, the chief and best Informer of the Mind—That after the Revolution of so many Ages, Mankind should be just in the same Place, whence they first set out—That they should be able to learn nothing, either from the Wisdom or Folly, the Success or Miscarriage of those who went before them—but that one Generation should be still trudging on after another, in the same dull beaten Road, without once attempting to strike out either to the right Hand or left—To suppose this, is not only highly injurious to human Nature, but is moreover contrary to History and Experience, as well as to the Nature of Man, and Reason of Things.

For has not there been a Time, when Arts and Sciences were not? Are not the first Inventors of several of them known? Have we not the History of the Rise, Progress, and

168 *Improvement of the World*

Improvements of most of them? And is not the Use and Subserviency of them all in Life, too well known to need any Proof? Every succeeding Generation has the Advantage of the fore-going, added to its own Experience; and one Age may learn Wisdom even by the Folly of another, and improve by its very Errors; and when the Sons get upon the Fathers Shoulders, they must necessarily see farther, even tho' they should be allow'd to be shorter of Stature. We need only compare the present State of civilized Nations with the Accounts we have of the Way of Living, in the Infancy of the World, to be convinced of the Difference.

In the first State of Nature, Men differ'd but little from brute Beasts. Roots, Herbs, and Acorns, were their only Dainties: Cloathing they had none, unless, peradventure, it were the Skins of wild Beasts, slain by them in Defence of their Lives; which were daily expos'd a Prey, not only to Wolves and Tygers, but to the worser Savages of their own Kind; as they lived without Law, or any other Restraint or Security, but what was plac'd in each Man's own Strength, or Cunning. Afterwards, when they began to unite into Societies, to cloath themselves, build Cottages, and apply themselves to Agriculture; the Persons who fell upon the first Hints of these rude Contrivances, were esteem'd such mighty Benefactors to Mankind, that they could never sufficiently express their Gratitude
to

to them. Hence they were made immortal, and divine Honours were paid to them; and hence it is well known, arose the Godship of *Jupiter, Bacchus, Minerva, Ceres*, and the rest of that Tribe of Deities: But there is not a *Plough-boy* now, that would not have been a God, even to *Jupiter* himself; had he lived in his Days, with his present Skill in Husbandry. ‘Had the Mystery of Printing been ‘invented in antient Times, *Gutenberg* of ‘*Mentz* might have been a God of higher ‘Esteem throughout *Germany*, than *Mercury*, ‘or *Jupiter* himself,’ is a Remark, which I think *Dr Jackson* somewhere makes.

Should we be willing to change Conditions with our uncultivated Ancestors of this Island, and live in those Days when Men scarce knew the Use of Cloaths, or of any thing else?—Had nothing to pride themselves in, but the Paint of their Bodies—lived promiscuously in little

— — *Cum frigida parvas*
Præberet Spelunca Domos.— — *Juv. Sat. 3.*

Huts—and were confined in their Diet to Milk, and what Animals they could kill in Hunting?

What vast Improvements must have been made in this Country, since the Time it was first conquer’d and civilized by the *Romans*, to bring it to its present State; abounding with all the Necessaries, Conveniences, and Superfluities of Life, cultivated and fertilized in its Soil, (*See Ch. 4.*) adorned with stately Palaces,

170 *Improvement of the World*

ces, large Towns, and flourishing Cities; flowing with Wealth; furnish'd with the most valuable Commodities of all the known Parts of the World, and polish'd with every Art that improves, or adorns Life!

Indeed, there are still too many Nations in remote Corners of the Earth, who do not seem to have improved at all upon their Forefathers, but rather to have degenerated from them, and sunk beneath them in Ignorance and Barbarity. These are left as so many melancholy Instances of what human Nature in general formerly was, and would have still continued to be, if the World had not been meliorated and improved, as some contend it is not. At the same Time they serve as Foyls to the more civilized and enlightned Part of Mankind, and by way of Contrast, in a lively Manner set off the noble Privileges and Advantages, with which the due Application of the Talents entrusted to us by God is rewarded.

One great Disadvantage which these poor Creatures generally labour under, is that they have been secluded, and shut out in a manner from the rest of the World; having had no Communication by Traffick or Commerce with their Fellow-Creatures; which has contributed as much as any one human Means to the civilizing of the World; especially in these latter Ages, wherein, by the Discoveries and Improvements that have been made in Navigation, and other Arts, an Intercourse hath been open'd, between the several Parts of the
World;

World; whereby Mankind supply their mutual Wants and Conveniences, and copy from each other whatever new Customs, Manners, Inventions, &c. they meet with, which they esteem useful and ornamental in Life.

Another Blessing which hath accrued to the World in its civil Capacity, and which hath greatly contributed to promote and settle the Peace, Security, and general Welfare of Mankind, are the Improvements and Regulations, which from Time to Time have been made in Civil Government; which may be reckon'd as so many Steps towards the Removal of the Curse in this respect; for as all Disorders of Society are to be esteem'd as Consequences of the Fall, and of Man's Disobedience to the first Law, so these Disorders are rectified, and provided against for the future, by the enacting of wise and salutary Laws; by providing for the Defects observed Time after Time, in the several Forms of Government; and by the Study and Refinement, which able and skilful Statesmen, one Age after another, have made in the Art of Politicks; by which Means the Lives, Liberties, and Properties of all Ranks and Orders of Men, are well defended and maintain'd in civilized Nations: A Happiness to which former Times, and worse regulated Governments at present are Strangers! Nor can it be supposed that so complicated a Machine, consisting of so many Movements, Springs, and Wheels, as every System of Government

172 *Improvement of the World.*

vernment must have, could be brought into any tolerable Harmony and Order, without the continued Labour of many wise Heads for several successive Generations.

It is the Opinion of a great Statesman, and Civilian, 'That there was no Magistracy, nor any civil Government, in the *Antediluvian* World; it being scarcely to be imagined that such abominable Licentiousness, and the Confusion of all Rights and Laws human and divine, could have been introduced, where the Power of Magistrates and Laws was exercised.' And, as he adds, 'It is observable, that after once the Rules of Government were constituted, we do not find that Mankind in general did run into the same Enormities, of which God Almighty was obliged to purge the World by an universal Punishment; tho' the Root of the Evil was remaining, as well after as before the Deluge.*' And a little after the same Author observes, 'That as no human Affairs come immediately to Perfection, so were the first Institutions of civil Society very simple and imperfect, till by Degrees all the Parts of the supreme civil Power, together with such Laws and Constitutions as were requisite for the maintaining of a civil Society, were settled and instituted.'

And tho', upon the Increase of Mankind after the Flood, the Experience of the many Evils of a State of Nature, soon put them up-
on

* *Puffendorf's* Introd. to History. *Sub initio.*

on forming themselves into Societies under some Sort of Governments; yet how imperfect they were for many Ages, may in a great Measure appear from the Commotions and Confusions, the Usurpations, Tyrannies, Treasons and Conspiracies, Massacres, Revolutions, and various Enormities, which occur so frequently in the Histories of all antient States: And the farther we trace them towards their Infancy, the greater generally are the Violences and Outrages committed in them; which were better provided against when they came to be well regulated and settled. But whenever they happen'd, even these Commotions in the Body Politick, like Fermentations in the natural Body, generally tended to purify and refine it.

The Laws of antient Times were more simple in Proportion to the Simplicity of the World; and their Maxims of Government were more coarse and shallow, and were generally founded on Arbitrary Power: But as the World grew more subtle, Laws and Politicks became more subtle and refined likewise. Formerly, when the least Disputes arose between neighbouring Powers, Recourse was immediately had to Arms, as the only way they knew of deciding them; and how many Lives have been often sacrificed, not only to Ambition, but Caprice and mere Punctilio's, no one needs be informed, who is in the least conversant in antient Story. And tho' the Sword rages so much at present, and makes
its

174 *Improvement of the World*

its Ravages to be felt in neighbouring Nations, yet it generally is used as the last Expedient, being seldom unsheath'd till the more peaceable Methods of Accommodation have been first tried, and found unsuccessful. And it is to be hoped, that at length, all States will see it their Interest to submit their Differences to Mediation, and that War and Bloodshed will cease, at least among Christians.

The *Romans* were reputed the wisest People in the World, as undoubtedly they were the most considerable, in other respects; yet we can have no great Opinion of their Government; I mean the Legislative Part of it, when we consider that it was 300 Years before they had any written Laws among them; and those which they then enacted were not of their own contriving, having been mostly borrowed from a neighbouring State: And it is but seldom that the Laws of one Country, suit well with another, whose Government is different, and the Genius of the People different too.

And that there were some fundamental Errors in the Constitution of the *Roman* State, which they never had Skill enough in Politics to rectify, is evident without entering deeper into it, from the many Changes and Revolutions which from time to time it underwent, so as to run through all the known Forms of Government, and at length to end in a total Dissolution.

The Superstructure was too large for the
Foun-

Foundation, insomuch that at length it fell by its own Weight : When its Period of old Age came on, it decay'd apace, and by Degrees made Way for other Powers, which grew out of its Ruins; and for one of a different Kind from, and I could wish to have added, of a better than, all others : But it must be owned to have excell'd them in nothing but hellish Policy and Wickedness.

Is not this, then, you'll say, a plain Proof, that the World grows daily worse and worse? Agreeably to the *Roman* Poet's Observation of his own Times,—

*Ætas Parentum peior Avis tulit
Nos nequiores, mox daturos
Progeniem vitiosorem.**

—And Abundance of Authorities more which might be cited to the same purpose. With regard to which I might content my self with saying, that if all the Observations concerning the growing Degeneracy of human Nature, which from Age to Age have been made, were true, what a sad Pass must the World have come to by this Time ! It would have been no better than a mere Hell upon Earth, and Men had been long ago degenerated into very Devils. But to let the Reader see that the other Side of the Question is not unsupported by Authority, I shall give him
a few

* *Horat. Carm. Lib. iii. Ode 6.*

176 *Improvement of the World*

a few Instances of it, which perhaps may be of some Weight with him.

I shall begin with the *judicious Hooker*.
 ‘ We all make Complaint, *says he*, of the
 ‘ Iniquity of our Times, and not unjustly,
 ‘ for the Days are Evil. But compare them
 ‘ with those Times, wherein there were no ci-
 ‘ vil Societies, with those Times, wherein
 ‘ there was as yet no manner of publick Re-
 ‘ gimen establish’d—And we have surely
 ‘ good Cause to think, that God hath blessed
 ‘ us exceedingly, and hath made us behold
 ‘ most happy Days.’ *

‘ It is an Error,’ *says Mr Bayle*, ‘ to
 ‘ believe that the World grows daily worse
 ‘ and worse, since it is certain the Age where-
 ‘ in we live, has not been able to furnish us
 ‘ in the West, with a Series of Enormities in
 ‘ a few Years, comparable to those which were
 ‘ committed between the Years 1345, and
 ‘ 1390 †.’ And he mentions an Author, ||
 whom I have not seen, who has composed a
 Discourse in Opposition to this Error, *viz.*
 that the World grows worse and worse.

And an Author of our own, Dr *Hakewill*,
 about a Century ago, wrote a large Treatise,
 entitled, *an Apology for the Power and Pro-
 vidence of God*, wherein he thoroughly exa-
 mines and explodes the common Error touch-
 ing Nature’s perpetual and universal Decay.
 And

* Ecclesiastical Polity, B. i. §. 10.

† Bayle’s Dict. Vol. iv. p. 305 a.

|| The *Sieur de Rampalle*. See *ib.* p. 563. a.

And I have in a former Chapter *cited another considerable Authority to the same Purpose. But there is a more considerable than all still in Reserve, of one who for his Knowledge of Mankind, of the World, and the whole Course of Nature, and for the Judgment which he passed upon them, justly claims the Precedence in Wisdom of all the Sons of Men.

The renown'd *Solomon* I mean, who reproves this querulous Humour of magnifying the former Times at the Expence, and to the Diminution of the present, which it seems prevail'd in his Days, as well as it hath done ever since, tho' no People were ever happier than the *Israelites* under his Reign. *Say not thou, what is the Cause that the former Days were better than these? For thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.* Eccles. vii. 10. †

To proceed, — The Permission of such enormous Evils in the above-mentioned Ages, might be expedient to create in Mankind an Abhorrence of them, to put them upon redressing them, and securing against the like in Time to come. And, blessed be God, as bad as the present Age is, it is a Golden one in respect of some former Times; and tho' Disorders do still too much abound, yet there are few amongst us who do not abominate the Thoughts of Crimes perpetrated in the Days of our Ancestors, a few Centuries
N back-

* See p. 95. † See a Sermon by Dr Ibbot on the above Text wherein he shews the Groundlessness of Men's Complaints of the comparative Badness of their own Times.

178 *Improvement of the World*

backward. Hence People have been moved to exert themselves in Defence of their Lives, Liberties, and Properties, and have generally obtain'd better Security for them; so that now *every Man sits under his own Vine and Fig-tree*, and all Orders and Degrees of Men enjoy their Rights and Privileges in greater Safety than was formerly known.

This is the Case, more or less, of all *European Nations*: But it may be said without any national Prejudice, that none of them enjoys this Blessing in so eminent a Degree, as our own. Such is the Happiness and Excellency of our *English* Constitution, so equally is the Balance of Power settled between the several Parts of it, and such is the Harmony that runs thro' the whole, that the Welfare of every Individual is provided for, and the Peasant has the same Security for every Thing that is dear and valuable to him, as the Prince. But whoever is in the least acquainted with the History of *England*, must know that our Constitution was not brought to its present Degree of Perfection all at once; but that it was the Work of Ages, and cost much Blood and Treasure, underwent many violent Pangs and Convulsions, before it was established on its present happy Basis. And may it long continue still advancing in Perfection! May it be the Model of other States to copy after! And be the Glory and Emulation of the Kingdoms around it to the latest Generations!

But of all human Means, none hath contributed

tributed so much to the Improvement and Advancement of human Nature, as Learning and the Attainment of Arts and Sciences. The enlightning and cultivating of the Understanding, the enlarging, elevating, and enriching the Mind by useful Knowledge and true Philosophy, is the noblest Acquisition, the distinguishing Felicity of a rational Creature. But how many and great Disadvantages Mankind in the early Ages of the World labour'd under in this respect, and how confined and low their Knowledge was, will not be difficult to conceive, if it be consider'd how unexperienc'd they were—That they were, probably, for many Ages unacquainted with the Use of Letters, as I shall presently shew—That Arts and Sciences were either not at all, or but imperfectly discover'd at best—That they had nothing to work upon but their own poor Stock of Ideas—That little was to be learn'd by conversing with each other, where all were equally ignorant—And that the one Generation had no way of having the Observations of the foregoing convey'd to it, but by Tradition; till such Time as Letters were invented, and the Use of them became frequently known.

Of all the Inventions and Discoveries which the World hath had the Benefit of, this is certainly the most beneficial, as well as the most wonderful. For this Art hath been experienced to be the best Means of preserving and communicating Science in all its Parts,

180 *Improvement of the World*

as well as the most helpful in conducting the various Affairs of human Life: It fixes our fleeting Thoughts; expresses the Conceptions of our Minds with greater Clearness and Precision than even Language itself; stamps them in legible Characters; makes us Masters of the Product of other Men's Labours and Studies, as well as of our own; and is the most faithful Repository of both that ever hath been, or could be invented.

The learned Mr *Shuckford* attempts to account for the Invention and gradual Improvement of this useful Art, in his Connection of History, *Vol. 1. B. 4.* whence, tho' I cannot agree with him in this Particular, I shall take the Liberty of transcribing a Passage, in which that ingenious Gentleman's Reasoning concerning the Rise and Progress of Arts in general, is very just, as well as applicable to my present Purpose.

' If we consider the Nature of Letters', says he, ' it cannot but appear something strange, ' that an Invention so surprizing as that of ' Writing is, should have been found out in ' Ages so near the Beginning of the World. ' Nature may easily be supposed to have ' prompted Men to speak,* to try to express ' their Minds to one another by Sounds and ' Noises; but that the Wit of Man should, ' amongst its first Attempts, find out a Way to ' express Words in Figures or Letters, and to ' form a Method, by which they might expose
to

* See p. 26.

‘to View all that can be said or thought, and
‘that within the Compass of sixteen, or twenty,
‘ty, or four and twenty Characters, variously
‘placed, so as to form Syllables and Words—
‘I say, to think, that any Man could immediately and directly’, or indeed at all, ‘fall
‘upon a Project of this Nature, exceeds
‘the highest Notion we can have of the Capacity we are endued with. We have great
‘and extraordinary Abilities of Mind, and
‘we experience, that by Steps and Degrees we
‘can advance our Knowledge, and make almost all Parts and Creatures of the World
‘of Use and Service to us; but still all these
‘Things are done by Steps and Degrees. A
‘first Attempt has never yet perfected any
‘Science or Invention whatever. The Mind
‘of Man began to exert itself as soon as ever
‘it was set on thinking: And we find the first
‘Men attempted many of the Arts, which after Ages carried forwards to Perfection; but
‘they only attempted them, and attained no
‘farther than to leave imperfect Essays to those
‘that came after. The first Men, tho’ they
‘had a Language to be understood by, yet
‘certainly never attain’d to an Elegancy of
‘speaking. *Tubal-Cain* was the first Artificer
‘in Brass-Work and Iron, but without doubt,
‘his best Performances were very ordinary, in
‘Comparison of what has been done by later
‘Artists. The Arts of Building, Painting,
‘Carving, and many others were attempted,
‘very early; but the first Tryals were only

182 *Improvement of the World*

‘ Attempts ; Men arrived at Perfection by
 ‘ Degrees ; Time and Experience led them on
 ‘ from one Thing to another, until, by having
 ‘ try’d many Ways, as their different Fancies,
 ‘ at different Times, happen’d to lead them,
 ‘ they came to form better Methods of execu-
 ‘ ting what they aim’d at, than at first they
 ‘ thought of.’ And thus, he concludes, it hap-
 pen’d in the Affair of Letters ; but how
 justly will appear presently.

Another plausible Account of the Rise and
 Progress of Writing, is given us by the learn-
 ed Author of *The Divine Legation of Moses*.
 Book the 4th. Sect. 4.

He naturally enough supposes, that Men’s
 first Essays of this Kind were made, by draw-
 ing, as well as they could, the Pictures of the
 Things they had a Mind to express.—That
 these were improved by the *Egyptian Hiero-
 glyphics*—and these again by more contracted
 Marks, such as are at present in use among the
Chinese—And that these last were abridged,
 and by a small Alteration turn’d into *Alph-
 abetical Letters*. This Deduction of Writing
 from *Pictures* to *Letters*, seems easy and nat-
 ural enough, with regard to the gradual
 Change made in the Shapes and Figures of the
 several Characters : But if we consider the
 Difference between an *Hieroglyphic* and a *Let-
 ter*, in their Nature and Use, it is not so easy
 to conceive how the one Invention could arise
 out of the other. For as the one kind of
 Character was a Sign of *Things*, and the other
 of

of *Sounds*—As one *Hieroglyphic*, when refined, was made to stand for more than one, sometimes for many Things, together with their several Modes, Qualities and Circumstances—And on the other hand, as there are often several *Sounds* that go to express one *Idea*, and several *Alphabetical Letters* to express one *Sound*—This Change, as it was far from being natural, so neither could it be conceived, beforehand, to be more concise or expressive. For how could it enter any human Mind to paint Thoughts or Words; or to make *Figures*, and these but few in Number, to represent *Ideas*, or *Sounds*, both which are innumerable*; and to imagine again, that those should express *Things* better than the *Figures* of the *Things* themselves? Nor is it less improbable, that they should think of *abridging* the prodigious Number of their Characters by *multiplying*,—or of *contracting*, by *dissolving* each of those Characters into Ten, Twenty, or perhaps a Hundred; which was the Case in one Sense, tho' it proved to answer the contrary Purpose in Effect.

Therefore I cannot be induced to think, that *Hieroglyphics* could ever lead Men into the Invention of *Letters*. And what ought to be admitted as a convincing Proof hereof is, that the *Chinese* (whose Genius and Capacity for the Invention and Improvement of all useful Arts, do not seem to be a whit inferior to

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* *Qui sonos Vocis, qui infiniti videbantur, paucis literarum notis terminavit?* Cicero Tusc. Quæst. Lib. I.

184 *Improvement of the World*

those of any People, antient or modern) have not in the Course of so many Ages stumbled upon a Thing so very *obvious* and *easy*, tho' they have been all this while groping upon the very Borders of it, and beating about the Bush, when they had but one *Step* to advance, to slide into it.* If the *Egyptians* could find out this Art so soon, surely this other People too had by some Chance or other, lit on it before now: But since they have had so many thousand Years Tryal, and are still as far from it, as when they first set out, we have from hence good Grounds to conclude, that it is not the Object of human Invention; for Nature, as this learned Author justly observes, is uniform throughout.

Therefore I cannot still but think, that the truest Account of the Origin of Alphabetical Writing is, that it was taught by God to *Moses*, notwithstanding this Opinion is in so low and indecent a Manner ridiculed by this learned Writer†. For,

I. The Scripture does not *imply*, but is repeatedly *express*, that the *Ten Commandments* were written with the FINGER OF GOD.

II. This is the oldest Instance of Alphabetical Writing, not only that has been convey'd down to us, but that we have any certain, or even probable Tradition of; and therefore it justly carries the Claim of Priority from every other,

* See *Divine Legation*, Vol. ii. Part 1. p. 78. † p. 139. He calls it a Fancy that only sticks out of the Tail of an Hypothesis.

other, till such Time as some other is proved to have been prior to it.

III. There are sufficient Reasons for this unparallel'd Instance of divine Condescension, arising from the growing Need, and indeed, Necessity of this Invention.

In the first Ages of the World, when the Revelations of GOD's Will (as well as Knowledge in general, and the Business of civil Life) lay within a narrow Compass, the whole was no more than what Men might have carried in their Heads, without over-burthening of their Memories, or requiring any extraordinary Provision in Aid or Relief of them: And especially as their Lives were so long, Tradition was a sufficient Means of conveying what Revelations had been made to them, with Safety to Posterity. But the Age of Man being reduced to the present Standard, about the Time of *Moses*, as appears from *Psalms* xc. the Title of which shews it to have been written by him; and GOD being then about delivering a large Body of Laws by him to the *Israelites* (which were of too much Importance, as well as too numerous, to be trusted to Memory and uncertain oral Tradition, or to any Method of Record then found out) more certain and durable Means became expedient, in order to preserve them from Oblivion and Corruption; and therefore GOD Almighty thought fit to reveal the Use of Writing; which he did by entring down the chiefest Part of his Law in this Manner,

186 *Improvement of the World*

as a Specimen for recording of the Whole; which has been ever since experienced to be beyond Comparison the best Method of recording Things, of all others. But.

IV. The learned Author himself hath furnished us with another Reason for the Use of Alphabetical Writing at this Time, *viz.* to preserve the Integrity of the true Religion from Idolatry. 'All *Hieroglyphick Writing*', as he shews, 'was absolutely forbidden by the second Commandment; and with a View worthy of the divine Wisdom; *Hieroglyphics* being the great Source of the most abominable Idolatries and Superstitions.* In order, therefore, effectually to abolish the Use of them, and cut off all Occasion of Danger from *Symbolic Images*, was it not as becoming the same Wisdom to teach Men a more commodious Way of Writing, and such as was quite different in its Nature, as well as Form? This our Author seems to be aware of; for finding *Hieroglyphics* to be forbidden by the second Commandment, he found it likewise natural to suppose, that some such Expedient should at the same Time be invented to draw off the People from the Use of them as much as possible; and therefore he is *easily persuaded* to believe, that to this End *Moses* alter'd the Form of the *Egyptian* Letters, reducing them from the Resemblance they bore to the *Hieroglyphic* Marks they were taken from, to something like those simple Shapes

* *Divine Legation*, &c. Vol. ii. p. 140.

Shapes in which we now find them. So that here is a Concession of an Improvement at least made by *Moses* in *Alphabetical* Writing; and were it not for his favourite Scheme, perhaps, he might as *easily* be *persuaded* to yield him the entire Honour of the *Invention*. For what can be more natural to suppose, than that God in communing with *Moses* on the Mount, should address himself to him in some such manner as this? 'I find *Hieroglyphics* have been greatly abused to Idolatry, and therefore I think fit absolutely to forbid all Use of them: And to cut off all Handle of Excuse for using them, from their Subservience in civil Life, I here give you an Exemplar of Writing far more commodious in all respects, and for all Purposes whatsoever; which you may teach the People, so that they may have neither Pretence, nor Temptation to use any other.'

But, says the learned Writer, 'If God, was the immediate Author of the *Artifice*,' (as he is pleased to call it) 'it could scarce be but *Moses* would have recorded the History of its Invention, as the best Sanction to its Use, and best Security from the Danger of *Hieroglyphic* Writing'. As this negative Objection is the only one the Author brings against this Opinion, I shall consider it the more particularly.—

1. If the Usefulness of *Alphabetical* Writing was not a sufficient Recommendation of it in Preference to *Hieroglyphic*, are not we told

188 *Improvement of the World.*

told, that there was an exprefs Command, enforced with a fevere Commination, againſt the Breach of it, expreſſy inhibiting *Hieroglyphics*? And can we think, that the bare recording the Hiſtory of the Invention of Letters could be a better Sanction to their Uſe than this, or a better Security againſt the Danger of *Hieroglyphics*? The Author of the Invention was well known at firſt, and the Knowledge of him ſufficiently preſerved by Tradition, till ſuch Time as all Fondneſs for *Hieroglyphics* had been worn off. But in truth, we do not find in Fact, that there was any need of ſuch a Sanction as this, upon this Account. For as *forcibly* as the *Iſraelites* were inclined to Egyptian Manners, it does not appear they had any Inclination to this. But,

2. What, if after all I ſhould prove, that the Fact ſtands ſufficiently recorded by *Moses*? Will he then give up the Point, and fairly own himſelf convinced, when divine Teſtimony is produced againſt him?

The firſt Accounts we have of Writing occur in the Books of *Exodus* and *Deuteronomy*, and that we may form the better Judgment concerning this matter, I ſhall conſider the ſeveral Texts which make any Mention of it, in the Order in which they there ſtand.

The firſt that occurs is *Exod. xvii. 14.* where the Lord ſays unto *Moses*, *Write this for a Memorial in a Book, and rehearſe it in the Ears of Joshua.* A very ingenious and learned Writer, who appears to be particularly well-

well-skill'd in the sacred Language, has shewn that the original Words by us translated, *Write*, and *Book*, are by no means limited to the Sense, which they are now generally applied to, and understood in.* Notwithstanding, I am willing to allow that *Moses* could write at this time, which was before the giving of the Law. The next mention of Writing is in *Chap. xxiv. 4.* where it is said, *That Moses wrote all the Words of the Lord*, and *v. 7. that he took the Book of the Covenant, and read in the Audience of the People.* These Words of the Law are either all the Laws recorded in the four preceding Chapters, or at least the principal Part of them, *The ten Commandments.* And as this was before the Delivery of the two Tables written by God, which are not promised till afterwards, *v. 12.* of this 24th Chapter, it may from hence likewise be inferr'd, that *Moses* was skill'd in Writing before God deliver'd him the Tables.

But what kind of Writing this was which he was skill'd in is the Question. It is plain it could not be *Alphabetical* Writing; because if it were, what Occasion had there been for God's Writing these very Laws afterwards in this very manner? Was it to give any Addition to their Authority? It would have answer'd that End much better to have written them first himself, if indeed the bare Writing of them could have added at all to their Weight, after such a solemn and awful

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* See Miscellaneous Reflections on Mr Squire's Essays. p. 5.

190 *Improvement of the World*

Publication of them. Was it then for the better recording of them? There was no Occasion for that neither, if *Moses* had already done it in a manner sufficient for the Purpose. But since GOD took upon himself to write the Law, after *Moses* had once done it, this seems to be a plain Proof that *Moses* had not done it, and that he could not do it, in a sufficient Manner, and that this was the true Reason of GOD's condescending to do it himself. What kind of Writing then was that which *Moses* was at this Time skill'd in? In all Probability it was *Hieroglyphical* Writing, which he had learned in *Egypt*, this being the only Method of recording Matters of Importance hitherto used or known among them: And this might serve well enough for recording Victories and Triumphs, and other Matters of a civil Nature, and therefore GOD commands *Moses* to record the Victory over *Amalek* in the customary manner. And as *Moses* soon after received the several Laws recorded in the 20th and three following Chapters of *Exodus*, he of his own accord took down some Memorandums of them in the *Hieroglyphical*, that is, in the best manner he could, as he found that some Means of this kind were necessary for the Assistance of his Memory in retaining them. But these Laws were too numerous and of too great Importance to be entrusted to *Hieroglyphical* Writing, which cannot be conceived to be otherwise than very imperfect at best. And therefore GOD Al-

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mighty immediately upon this calls him up to him into the Mount. *Come up*, says he, *to me into the Mount, and be there*, (i. e. abide with me there forty Days, as we find he did, and chiefly, as is probable, for this very Purpose) *and I WILL GIVE THEE Tables of Stone, and a Law and Commandments WHICH I HAVE WRITTEN*, (This Law and Commandments were materially the very same that *Moses* had written, and *GOD* himself had deliver'd from the Mount, and could differ only in the Form and Manner of Writing them) *that thou mayest teach them. i. e.* that thou mayest teach the Nobles, or chosen Men, beforementioned v, 11. to read and copy them, as the late learned Mr *Johnson* rightly understood this Text. *

Agreeably to this Promise we read, *Exod.* xxxi. 18. *That GOD gave unto Moses two Tables of Testimony, Tables of Stone, written with the Finger of GOD*, and Chap. xxxii. 16. *That the Tables were the Work of GOD, and the Writing was the Writing of GOD, graven upon the Tables.* And *Deut.* ix. 10. These same Tables are again said to be *written with the Finger of GOD.* Which Words are as express as Words can be, that both the preparing of these two Tables, and the Writing or Graving upon them proceeded from the immediate Efficiency of *GOD* himself.

But

* See Mr *Johnson's* Preface to the 2d Vol. of his *Sermons* concerning the Origin of Alphabetical Letters.

192 *Improvement of the World*

But now concerning the Fate of these two Tables we learn, *Exod.* xxxii. 19. *Deut.* ix. 17. That *Moses*, in his Anger against the People's Idolatry in worshipping the Golden Calf, brake them in his Descent from the Mount. To repair this Loss, *GOD* soon after gives Orders for the Renewal of the Tables. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two Tables of Stone like unto the first, and I will write upon these Tables the Words that were in the first Tables, which thou brakest.* *Exod.* xxxiv. 1. And this Matter is related in much the same Manner in *Deut.* x. 1. whence we are given to understand, that *Moses* prepared this Pair of Tables, and that *GOD* wrote upon them. But in *Exodus* xxxiv. 27, 28. this Matter is related in another manner—For here the Lord says unto *Moses*, *Write thou these Words*—and accordingly *He* (undoubtedly *Moses*) *wrote upon the Tables the Words of the Covenant, the ten Commandments*, so that here seem to be two contradictory Accounts of the same Matter. In one place the Writing is ascribed to *GOD*; in the other to *Moses*. There are two Ways of solving this seeming Contradiction, which I shall lay before the Reader, that he may chuse that which best pleaseth him.

I. When *GOD* was about to deliver the moral Law in Writing the first Time, he both prepared the Tables and wrote upon them himself, which there had been no Necessity for his doing, had not this kind of

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Writing been at that Time utterly unknown to *Moses*. But when the Tables came to be renew'd, *Moses*, having seen a Specimen in the former, was capable of making another Pair after their Pattern; and accordingly GOD commands him, *Hew thee* (פסל לך *PeSal LeCa*,) *Hew unto thy self, i.e. for thy own Use or Writing, two Tables of Stone like unto the first.* And when this was done, having likewise seen an Exemplar of this new Method of Writing, which without doubt he also diligently studied during his first forty Days Continuance on the Mount, GOD farther orders him, *Write thou, or according to the Original* (כתב לך *CeTHaB LeCa*) *Write unto thyself these Words; for after the Tenor of these Words I have made a Covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was there with the Lord forty Days and forty Nights, he did neither eat Bread nor drink Water. And he wrote upon the Tables the Words of the Covenant, the ten Commandments.* As the Continuance of *Moses* on the Mount forty Days and Nights is mentioned between the Command of Writing, and his Execution of it, this I think is a plain Indication, that his chief Employment during that Period consisted in Writing the Law, and studying it; otherwise why is this Circumstance here mention'd? For *Moses* being but a young Scholar must have required more Time than perhaps we may imagine, to perfect himself both in the one and the other. And having had but one

194 *Improvement of the World*

Copy, we cannot suppose he was very expert at imitating of it; and therefore God Almighty condescended to superintend the Work, and vouchsafed him his Assistance and Direction as far as was necessary, in order to the perfecting of it. And thus this Act might properly be ascribed to both, as both may be said to have bore a Part in the Work.

The other Account, which was communicated to me by a Friend, supposes, that agreeably to *Exod. xxxiv. 1.* God made out a second Original of the Law, after the Destruction of the first; and that the Relation which follows, *v. 27, 28.* is an Account of *Moses* taking a Copy of it—That the Original was to be repositied in the sacred Chest, and the Copy to remain with *Moses* for common Use, that the People might be instructed out of it in their Duty, and taught to read and write by it.

This Account likewise seems very natural, and *Moses*, according to this Supposition, having the Original before him, might the more easily make out a Copy from it. The only Objection that seems to lye against it is, that Mention is made but of one Pair of Tables prepared by *Moses, v. 1.* neither does he seem to have had any more than one Pair in his Hands, when he came down from the Mount, *v. 29.* as it is certain, when he brake the first Tables, he had none other; but was to have copied them after his Descent. However, I think it is not very material, whether the Tables

bles which *Moses* was concern'd in writing, was a Copy, or an Original. For undoubtedly many Copies were afterwards made out both by himself and others, by the Heads of the People at least, and carefully compared with the Original. For the constant Preservation of which sacred *Κειμήλιον*, an Ark, or Archive, which was therefore called *the Ark of the Covenant*, was by GOD's special Appointment provided for its Reception, and lodged in the most holy Place; not to be approached but upon special Occasions, and by Persons specially appointed. For *Moses* informs us, that having been commanded by GOD to make an Ark of Wood, and to put the Tables in it, he accordingly did put them in the Ark which he had made, *and there they be*, says he, *as the Lord commanded me.* Deut.x. 5.

And thus I have endeavoured to vindicate and ascertain the Invention of Alphabetical Writing to its true Author, and have shewn that such extraordinary Provision was made for preserving the Original of it, as was never parallel'd with regard to any other Instrument whatsoever, pursuant to which it was preserved most religiously for many Ages; so that from the whole I hope it appears, that this Matter has been so well *recorded*, that it stands upon *Record* even to this Day. Mr *Warburton* therefore was too hasty in objecting the Want of its being *recorded* as well as in pronouncing, that this Opinion has no Countenance from Scripture.

196 *Improvement of the World*

Let us now see how the Argument stands.

The *Egyptians* are the only People to whom the Invention of Alphabetical Writing is ascribed, at least by Mr *Warburton*. If it was known to them before the Time of *Moses*, it must have been known to him likewise, who *was learned in all the Wisdom of the Egyptians*. If it was known to him, what need was there for God's Writing an Exemplar of his Law, after *Moses* had already written one himself? And what need was there for his undergoing so much Instruction in this kind of Writing, as it evidently appears he did?—Of having a second Pair written for him after he had broken the first—at least, of being assisted in the Writing of them? No moral Reason can be assigned for this, as I have already shewn: Therefore we conclude it was a natural one, God wrote the first Tables, because *Moses* could not then write alphabetically.—If *Moses* could not, neither could the *Egyptians*—nor any other People. Therefore this Invention was communicated to *Moses* by God, and by *Moses* to the rest of the World.

I shall only observe farther, that it hence appears, that the * first Body of Laws which was ever deliver'd in Writing to any People was that contained in the Mosaic Tables: Whence it follows, that this Method of record-

* *Vide Cunei de Repub. Hebræorum, Lib. i. cap. i.*

ording their Laws upon *Stone-Tables* had not then obtain'd among the *Egyptians*, and therefore that they must have borrowed this Custom, as well as others, from the *Israelites*, and not these latter from them, as Mr *Warburton* imagines. Vol. i. p. 178.

This learned Gentleman promises to shew, that many *Egyptian* Customs were indulged the *Israelites*, but I cannot find he has made it out as yet with regard to any one: And indeed I should be surprized to see he did, as I should then be quite at a Loss to reconcile such an Indulgence with many Passages of Scripture, particularly with that Prohibition which I find in the Law—*After the Doings of the Land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do—neither shall ye walk in their Ordinances.* Lev. xviii. 3. And I think it would become Gentlemen, who espouse that Side of the Question upon Principles of Reveal'd Religion, first to examine its Consistency with it, before they declare themselves so peremptorily. To proceed,

The Foundations of Learning being laid, those who had Leisure for Study proceeded to build upon them; but there were not many in the early Ages of the World who could afford Time for Speculation, when Mankind was hard put to it to provide themselves with the Necessaries and Conveniences of Life; and therefore Learning was more confined, till Nature by Degrees became more tractable, and fewer Hands were required for the necessary Em-

198 *Improvement of the World*

ployments of Life. The sooner any Nation was settled and accommodated in other respects, the sooner it had Leisure to cultivate the politer Arts; and Colonies being transplanted out of the civilized into the more barbarous Countries, carried what Knowledge they had along with them: And a Communication, by these and other Means, being opened by Degrees between the several Parts of the World and each other, Learning became more diffused, and like the Rising-Sun, extended its Rays still wider and wider to enlighten the dark Corners of the Earth, still increasing in Strength, the nearer it approach'd towards its Meridian, in the *Augustan Age*; which it had scarcely reach'd before it presently verged towards a Declension. And in this declining State it continued, till at length it suffer'd almost a total Eclipse in the dark and ignorant Ages, by the breaking in of the barbarous northern Nations. A Writer of * great Name and Authority in this respect, attributes the Decay of Letters among the antient *Romans* to the Loss of their Liberty. And it is certain in Fact, that Arts and Sciences never flourished so much as in free States: Witness those of *Greece*, as well as that of *Rome*, in all which both Arts and Liberty rose and fell together. And it is no less observable, that as it was undoubtedly owing to the *Papal Tyranny*, that the World was afterwards kept so long in Ignorance, agreeably to its avowed Prin-

* Lord Shaftsbury's *Characteristicks*, Vol. i. p. 219.

Principles and Interest; so it was when its oppressive Yoke began to be shaken off, that Learning revived and emerged from under those thick Clouds of Darkneſs, which had ſo long obſcured it.

For the *Wickliffites* and *Huffites* having had Recourſe to the Scriptures in order to find out the true Faith, and detect the Errors and Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, brought the Study of the divine Oracles into Vogue. The Diſputes between the *Latin* and *Greek* Churches about the beginning of the XV. Century, occaſioned the Writers of Controverſy to ſtudy the *Greek* and *Latin* Fathers in their Originals: And the taking of *Constantinople* by the *Turks*, about the Middle of it, having obliged the Chriſtians of the *Greek* Church to betake themſelves for Refuge into *Italy* and the adjacent Parts, and being there well received by the Family of the *Medici*, and other Patrons of Learning, the Study and Knowledge of the *Greek* Language was ſtill farther promoted in theſe Western Parts. And the Art of PRINTING having been found out about the ſame Time, became the Means of reviving uſeful and polite Learning in general: By the Benefit of which excellent Contrivance, it has made ſuch Haſte to recover the Ground it had loſt, that it is become more diffuſed and general among all Ranks of Men, than ever it was before; and ſo quick has its Progreſs been, that it hath advanced more within theſe three Centuries laſt paſt, than otherwiſe it could have

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200 *Improvement of the World*

have done in ten; insomuch that with regard to the solid and substantial Parts of it at least, if it be still questioned by some, whether the Moderns excell the Antients, the next Age, I doubt not, will decide the Controversy: To which I shall therefore leave it, and shall only subjoin the Judgment of a great Man in this respect. 'We are extremely 'mistaken,' says he, 'in the Computation of 'Antiquity, by searching it backwards; because indeed the first Times were the youngest; especially in Points of natural Discovery 'and Experience.' *

With regard to the Progress of Learning since its Revival, we may observe, that as the first Thing to be done, was to rescue the Remains of antient Literature from the Rubbish and Obscurity in which they were buried, so this was the chief Employment of one Century; and this Task was with great Cost and Pains, executed by learned Printers, who, excepting *Erasmus* and a few more, were the only Men considerable for Letters in that Age. But in the following, the Number was much increased; and the Learning of those Times consisted chiefly in comparing and adjusting the various Readings, and restoring the true Text of antient Authors, which had greatly suffer'd by the Carelessness and Ignorance of Transcribers. This kind of Learning, as it was then most in Vogue, so was it indeed the most useful and necessary: And

* Sir H. Wotton's Remains, p. 298.

it was pursued with so much Diligence and Application, that the Subject of *Criticism* was in a manner exhausted by the great Numbers of those, who then excell'd in the Knowledge of the learned Languages; insomuch that they left scarce any Thing, besides some few Gleanings, for the Critics of the succeeding Age to exercise their Talents upon.

But all their great Learning was still but low and superficial, and often trifling, being employed altogether about Words, and confined to the Letter of Authors; but wanted that Taste of their Beauties, and that Force and Penetration to enter into the Spirit and Genius of them, which is the distinguishing Character of the present Age: Neither is this now so much the Study as Amusement of learned Men.

The *Belles Lettres* are little more than ornamental Accomplishments; and it may be truly said, that That is the least Part of our Knowledge, which is derived from the Fountains of Antiquity: That which makes up by far the greatest and most useful Part of it, (I need not remind the Reader, that I am here speaking of mere human Knowledge,) the Moderns may properly call their own, as it is chiefly the Produce of their own Brains, raised out of their own Stock, and built upon their own Bottom. Such is that which consists in good Sense and close refined Reasoning; Natural and Experimental Philosophy; Astronomy and Mathematical Learning in all its Branches;

202 *Improvement of the World*

Branches ; in which and in all other Parts of useful Learning such Discoveries and Improvements have of late Years been made, especially by our great Luminary Sir *Isaac Newton*, as render the present Age enlighten'd beyond the Hopes and Imaginations of former Times.

I shall conclude this Chapter with the Comparison made by two eminent Critics between the sixteenth and seventeenth Centuries.

‘ I am of Opinion,’ says one of them, ‘ that
 ‘ the sixteenth Century produced a greater
 ‘ Number of learned Men than the seven-
 ‘ teenth, and yet the former was not so en-
 ‘ lighten’d as the latter. Whilst the Reign of
 ‘ Criticism and Philology continued, every
 ‘ Part of *Europe* produced Prodigies of Eru-
 ‘ dition. The Study of the new Philosophy
 ‘ and of modern Languages having introduced
 ‘ another Taste, that universal and profound
 ‘ Literature has disappear’d ; but in Recom-
 ‘ pence, a certain Genius more refined, and
 ‘ accompanied with more exquisite Discern-
 ‘ ment, has spread itself over the Common-
 ‘ wealth of Learning : People are now a days
 ‘ less learned and more subtle.’ Thus far Mr
Bayle, who presently after brings in *Father*
Rapin to confirm his Opinion.

These are his Words—‘ We live in an Age
 ‘ wherein People attend more to good Sense
 ‘ and Reason than any Thing else ; and it may
 ‘ be said in our Commendation, that we are al-
 ‘ ready better acquainted with the Character of
 ‘ antient Authors, and more intimately familiar
 ‘ with

‘ with their Genius, than those who went before us. The Difference between them and us is, that in the last Age, People were more ambitious of Erudition, than they are at present—’Twas the Genius of those Times, wherein nothing was more in Vogue than a vast Capacity, a great Memory, and profound Literature. They studied Languages to the Bottom; applied themselves to reform or restore the Text of antient Authors by far-fetcht Interpretations; cavill’d about an equivocal Word; laid Stress upon a Conjecture, in order to establish a Correction; in short, they stuck to the literal Sense of an Author, because they had not Force enough to raise themselves up to his Spirit, and to be thoroughly acquainted with him, as we are at present, because we are more reasonable, and less learned, and set a greater Value upon plain good Sense, than an extensive, but perverse Capacity. *

* Bayle’s Dict. Vol. i. p 92. b.

C H A P.

CHAP. IX.

Containing some Account of Notices given to, and of the Notions and Expectations which prevail'd among the Antients, Jews, Heathens, and Christians; with regard to the future Restoration and Renovation of the World.

THE learned Dr Burnet, in his *Theory of the Earth*, has collected several Testimonies of the antient Philosophers, together with some Traditions and typical Allusions among the *Jews*, to which he has added the Opinions of the antient Fathers of the Church, all concurring in the Belief and Maintenance of this antient Doctrine, that after the Revolution of certain Periods, there will be a Renovation of all Things, *viz.* both of the natural and moral World. And tho' I differ from that learned Person in the manner of explaining this Doctrine, and by which this Renovation will be brought to pass; yet as I find several of his Testimonies are as applicable to my Scheme, as his own, and some of them much more so, I shall take the Liberty of extracting from him what relates to the present Subject.

'Tis

Opinion of the Antients. 205

‘ ‘Tis plain to me,’ says he, ‘ that there were
‘ among the Antients several Traditions or
‘ traditionary Conclusions, which they did
‘ not raise themselves by Reason and Observa-
‘ tion, but received them from an unknown
‘ Antiquity—The Renovation of the World
‘ is an antient Doctrine,’ of this kind, ‘ both
‘ among the *Greek and Eastern Philosophers*;
‘ but they shew us no Method *how* the World
‘ may be *renewed*, nor make any Proof of its
‘ future Renovation ; for it was not a Disco-
‘ very which they first made, but they receiv-
‘ ed it with an implicit Faith, from their Ma-
‘ sters and Ancestors. And these traditionary
‘ Doctrines were Fore-runners of that Light,
‘ which was to shine more clearly at the open-
‘ ing of the Christian Dispensation, to give a
‘ more full Account of the Revolutions of the
‘ natural World, as well as of the moral.

‘ The *Jews*, ’tis well known, held the Re-
‘ novation of the World, and a Sabbath after
‘ 6000 Years, according to a Prophecy cur-
‘ rent among them—Neither can I easily be-
‘ lieve,’ as he goes on, ‘ that those Constitu-
‘ tions of *Moses*, that proceed so much upon
‘ a Septenary, or the Number Seven, and have
‘ no Ground or Reason in the Nature of the
‘ Thing for that particular Number ; I cannot
‘ easily believe, I say, that they are either ac-
‘ cidental or humourfome, without Design or
‘ Signification ; but that they are typical, or
‘ representative of some Septenary State, that
‘ does eminently deserve and bear that Cha-
racter.

206 *Opinion of the Antients about*

‘racter. *Moses*, in the History of the Creation, makes six Days Work, and then a Sabbath; then after six Years, he makes a Sabbath-Year; and after, a Sabbath of Years, a Year of Jubilee, *Lev. xxv.* All these lesser Revolutions seem to me to point at the grand Revolution, the great Sabbath or Jubilee, after six Millenaries; which as it answers the Type in point of Time, so likewise in the Nature and Contents of it, being a State of Rest from all Labour, and Trouble, and Servitude; a State of Joy and Triumph, and a State of Renovation, when Things are to return to their first Condition and pristine Order.*

But these are not the only Allusions to this renovated State, which may be traced among the *Jews*. The Land of *Canaan*, when it was inhabited and cultivated, was the most fertile Country in the World; and I take it to have been then a *Type* of the future Fertility of the whole Earth, when the Curse shall be entirely removed from it. It is usually reckon'd a *Type* of Heaven, and the earthly, a *Type* of the heavenly *Jerusalem*: Why therefore may not each of them as naturally signify that future flourishing State upon Earth, which is stiled the *New Jerusalem*, *Rev. xxi.* and described in Characters, of which the Sumptuousness, as well as imputed Holiness, of the Temple and City of old *Jerusalem*, was a proper Emblem?

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* *Theory of the Earth*. Book iv. Chap. 3. *English Treatise*.

Moreover, under the Reign of *Solomon*, the *Jewish* State was arrived at its highest Pitch of Grandeur and Magnificence; which, perhaps, for Peace, Plenty, Riches, Renown, and all manner of worldly Felicity, was never equall'd by the most flourishing States upon Earth, either before, or since: And therefore it was a proper Type of the future flourishing State of *Christ's* Kingdom, as *Solomon* himself was a Type of *Christ*; and agreeably hereto, the glorious and beautiful Array of *Christ's* Spouse, the Church, is described in the Person of *Solomon's* Queen, *Psal.* xlv. and the Book of *Canticles* is writ on the same Subject.

The *Jewish* Policy and Form of Government, which was *Theocratical*, I apprehend to be *typical* of that more perfect *Theocracy* which God shall resume and establish, when he, according to his Promise, *shall restore the Kingdom to Israel, and all the Kingdoms of the Earth shall become the Kingdom of the Lord.*

Again, As Divines have observed an Analogy between the *Egyptian* Bondage, and the Tyranny of Sin, so the Continuance of the one for such a precise Number of Years, may possibly denote the Term of the others Duration, tho' it continues as yet a Secret to us: And as the *Israelites* were deliver'd from *Egypt*, by having a Passage open'd to them thro' the *Red Sea*, so the true *Israel* shall be delivered from the worse than *Egyptian* Slavery of Sin, by Means of the *Waters* of
Bap-

208 *Opinion of the Antients about*

Baptism, as they were *baptized in the Sea and in the Cloud*. Their forty Years wandering in and Passage thro' the Wilderness, before they arrived at the Promised Land, represent the many Labyrinths of Sin and Error, which Mankind should run thro', together with the Tedioufness and Difficulty of extricating themselves out of them: And their Entrance at length into the Holy Land, under the Conduct of *Josbua*, or *Jesus*, aptly sets forth the future Deliverance and Triumph of the Church, *the Woman in the Wilderness*, Rev. xii. 6. and its final Settlement in a State of Peace and Holiness, under the Conduct of *Jesus Christ, the Captain of our Salvation*. So again, in the many legal Washings and Purifications, and other Performances of the *Ceremonial Law*, are typified the Purity, Sanctity, and other moral Excellencies to which Mankind shall be restored by Means of the Christian Law. These, and the like, were *Figures for the Time then present, and Shadows of good Things to come*. They were our *Examples, and were written for our Admonition*. Heb. ix. 9.—x. 1.—1 Cor. x. 6, 11.—In a word, I take the whole Oeconomy of *Judaism* to be typical of *Christianity*; and if we were able dextrously to unravel its mystick Sense, I am persuaded, the History of the *Jewish Church and State*, would open us a Prospect into Futurity, and every Dispensation and Revolution in it would appear to have

have a Reference to something parallel under the Gospel.

Let us now see what Notions and Expectations of a renovated State prevail'd among the *Heathens*. To this Purpose it is to be observed,

1. That it was the profess'd End and Design of the *Heathen* Philosophy and Religions, to restore Men to the Likeness of GOD, and to their original Purity and Perfection. Nothing can be more admirable, nor breathe more of the Spirit of *Christianity*, than what *Pythagoras* taught in this respect, viz. that the Study of Philosophy tended to make Men like unto GOD, which was likewise maintain'd by *Socrates* and *Plato*, to be the true End of it. Thus *Hierocles* in the Introduction of his Commentary on the Golden Verses of *Pythagoras*, says,* 'That Philosophy is the 'Purgation and Perfection of our Natures, 'as it doth cleanse and purify us from 'the brutal Corruptions of our carnal Part, 'restores us to our native Excellence, makes 'us whole, pure and perfect; enables us to 'recover the Form of our first State, and to 'be made like unto GOD'—And with regard to Religion, *Plato* says, † 'That it was the 'Aim and Drift of Initiation into their sacred

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* Φιλοσοφία ἐστὶ ζωῆς ἀνθρωπίνης καθάρσις, καὶ τελειότης, καθάρσις μὲν, ἀπὸ τῆς ὕλικῆς ἀλοφίας. &c.

Hierocl. in Carm. Pythag. Commentarius.

† Σκοπὸς τῶν τελείων ἔστιν, εἰς τέλος ἀναλῆειν τὰς ψυχὰς ἐκείνο, ἐφ' ᾧ τὴν πρώτην ἰποιήσαντο κάθοδον, ὡς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς.

Platon. Phædo.

210 *Opinion of the Antients about*

‘Mysteries, to *restore* the Soul to that *Perfection*, from which, as from its original ‘State, it first fell.’ Whence it manifestly appears, that the *Heathens* had a Tradition convey’d down to them, of the original Perfection of Man, and of his Fall from it; and likewise, that they despair’d not of being restored to this their original State; however obscure their Notions were of that State, and however insufficient the Means were which they used for the Recovery of it.

2. That a Notion was current among the antient *Heathens*, that the World should be restored to a State of great Happiness, Peace, and Tranquillity, is evident from the Doctrine of two Principles, and the happy Issue of the Contest they maintain’d with each other; as it is represented by *Plutarch*: who tells us, ‘That it was a most antient Opinion, derived ‘from Divines and Legislators, the Author ‘unknown, but the Belief of it firmly establish’d, not only among the Vulgar, but Philosophers, and that it was admitted into the ‘religious Rites both of *Greeks* and *Barbarians*—* That there were two opposite Principles, the one the Author of Good, the ‘other of Evil—that *Zoroastres* the Magian, ‘named the one, *Oromazes*, the other, *Arimanius*—That *Oromazes* could not be better compared to any Object of Sense, than ‘to

* Νομίζουσι γὰρ θεὸς εἶναι δύο καθάπερ ἀντιθέτους. τὸν μὲν γὰρ ἁγαθόν, τὸν δὲ φαῦλον δημιουργόν, &c.

Plutarch de Iside & Osiride.

the Renovation of the World. 211

to Light; nor *Arimanius* to any thing more fitly than to Darknefs and Ignorance—that between thefe there was a middle Being, call'd *Mitbras*, which in the *Persian Language*, fignifies *Mediator*. That *Oromazes*, the God of Light, and *Arimanius*, the God of Darknefs, constantly wage War with each other. But that the Time appointed by the Fates fhall come, when *Arimanius* fhall be entirely vanquifh'd and destroy'd, by the Evils which he himfelf had introduced—That the Surface of the Earth fhould then become fmooth and even—that Mankind fhould lead one uniform Courfe of Life; fhould live in one happy Community together, and all fpeak one and the fame Language.' He adds, 'That *Theopompus* relates it as the Opinion of the *Magians*, that this Struggle is to continue 6000 Years, wherein both Parties fhould alternately prevail, and be employ'd in demolifhing each others Schemes and Operations. And that at the End of this Term, the evil Principle fhould be utterly overthrown, and that then Mankind fhould be happy.'

This antient Tradition has fuch a Mixture of Truth with its Errors, as proves it to be a manifefl Corruption of the History of the Introduction of Evil by Satan at the Fall, and of the Conteft which he has ever fince maintain'd with GOD. And it is the more remarkable, as its Agreement with Scripture may be traced in many Particulars. As 1ft, in com-

212 *Opinion of the Ancients about*

paring the good Principle to Light, and the evil one to Darknefs. For agreeably hereto, Light is in feveral Places of Scripture made the Emblem of the divine Majefty. Thus St *John* fays, *God is Light*. 1 Ep. i. 5.—James i. 17. he is call'd *The Father of Lights*. Pſal. civ. 2. He is ſaid to be *cloathed with Light*, and to *dwell in Light*. 1 Tim. vi. 16. And our Saviour Chriſt is likewise frequently call'd, *the Light of the World*, John viii. 12.—ix. 5. On the other hand, the Devil is, in Scripture, call'd the *Prince of Darknefs*, and his Power, *the Power of Darknefs*. Luke xxii. 53. And he and his Angels are call'd *Rulers of Darknefs*. Eph. vi. 12. And to mention no more, GOD, with a particular View to the Doctrine of two Principles, tells *Cyrus*—*I form the Light, and create Darknefs: I make Peace, and create Evil: I the Lord, do all theſe Things*. Iſa. xlv. 7. With regard to the Conteſt between them, we are told, *there was War in Heaven; that Michael and his Angels fought againſt the Dragon, and the Dragon fought and his Angels, and prevailed not, neither was their Place found any more in Heaven*. Rev. xii. 7, 8. ſo again, we read, *that for this Purpoſe the Son of GOD was manifeſted that he might deſtroy the Works of the Devil*. 1 John iii. 8. And the Devil on his Part is call'd, ὁ Ἀπολλύων, *The Deſtroyer*. Rev. ix. 11. With regard to the final Prevalence of Good over Evil, the Unity, and Felicity in general conſequent thereupon, its Agreement with

the Renovation of the World. 213

with Scripture will fully appear in the following Chapters.

What is farther remarkable in this Tradition, is the Circumstance of Time, *viz.* the Period of 6000 Years, wherein it so exactly agrees with the *Jewish* Prophecy above-mention'd, concerning a Renovation of the World at the End of that Period; whence therefore it was probably derived: For it is not to be imagined, that such an Agreement in the precise Number of Years, as well as in the Substance of the Prophecy, could have happen'd by Chance. For which Reason it may be hence inferr'd, that, that Prophecy was much more antient than the Time of *Rabbi Elias*, to whom it is commonly ascribed, as he did not live but about 200 Years before Christ; and that *Elias*, the *Tisbite*, has a better Title to it, if it be not more antient even than his Time.

3. Another Doctrine universally current among the antient *Heathen*, from which their Notions concerning the Renovation of the World may be plainly inferr'd, was that of the GOLDEN AGE, and the Renewal of it.

Whoever considers the Description of the GOLDEN AGE, which is given us by the *Heathen* Poets, and compares it with the past State of the World, thro' every Period of it, must be convinced, that the Tradition of its former Existence could have no real Foundation but in the Paradisiacal State. For, (1.) The GOLDEN AGE is supposed to have been

214 *Opinion of the Antients about*

the first Age of the World, and the original State of Nature. And (2.) the Purity, Plenty, and Felicity of it in general, is suitable to no succeeding Age, or State. And therefore, as a Notion prevail'd, that this State was to be restored, the Restoration of it can be no other than that of the State of Man in Paradise. For,

1. This Restoration is not to be till the last Age of the World ; for so *Virgil* describes it from the *Sibylline Oracles*.*

2. It is to be a State wherein the natural and moral World will be renovatèd and restored to their original Perfection.

3. As the World is by the Tradition supposed to have degenerated by Degrees, the succeeding Age being still described by the baser Metal, in this Order, the Golden, Silver, Brass, and Iron; so the Restoration of the GOLDEN AGE is to be brought about but by Degrees likewise, as is evident to any one who reads the Lines quoted below.†

4. This Description of *Virgil's* GOLDEN AGE has a remarkable Agreement in several Particulars, with many Passages of *Isaiab's* Prophecy concerning the flourishing Kingdom of the *Messiah*; which is none other than the pri-

* *Ultima Cumæi venit jam Carminis Ætas.* Ecl. iv. v. 4.

† *Pauca tamen suberunt prisca Vestigia Fraudis,
Quæ tentare Tætini Ratibus, quæ cingere Muris
Oppida, quæ jubeant Telluri insindere sulcos.
Alter erit tum Typhis, &c.*

*Hinc ubi jam firmata Virum te fecerit Ætas,
Cedet & ipse Ari Vektor : Nec Nautica Pinus
Mutabit Merces: omnis feret omnia Tellus.* ib. v. 31. & seqq.

the Renovation of the World. 215

primitive State restored, as I shall hereafter prove at large.

Upon the whole, this Tradition of the **GOLDEN AGE**, and of its Restoration, comes as fully up to the Point, and is as plain, as can well be expected, and as consonant to the Scripture-Doctrine in this respect, as will appear hereafter.

Nor is it sufficient to say, that this State has been intentionally restored by the coming of Christ, and the preaching of his Gospel; for tho' the Design and Tendency of the Christian Religion is to bring Peace upon Earth, and all the other Blessings which constitute the **GOLDEN AGE**, yet a design'd Accomplishment of a Thing, is in truth no Accomplishment at all.

This Tradition had the Authority of the *Sibylline Oracles* for its Support, which were of great Reputation in the old *Heathen* World: But it was more divulged than the Contents of those Books generally were, and was likewise of more certain and greater Antiquity; for we find it descanted upon by *Hesiod*, and the oldest *Heathen* Poets. And as it has its Foundation in the earliest Times, so the Rise of it is not otherwise to be accounted for, than that it was derived from *Noah*, the Fountain of all traditionary Learning, and probably made one of the *Dogmata Noachidarum*.

5. That the antient *Heathens* believed the World would be restored to its primitive State,

216 *Opinion of the Antients about*

is farther evident from that Doctrine of the Revolution of all Things, and RENOVATION of the World consequent thereupon, which was held by *Plato* and his Followers, and, as *Dr Burnet* shews, was current among the *Greeks* in general, and among the *Barbarick* Philosophers likewise, which were more antient, viz. the *Egyptians*, *Persians*, *Chaldeans*, *Indian Brachmans*, and other Eastern Nations. This Doctrine supposed an *Annus Magnus*, or great Year, at the End of which an entire mundane Revolution should be perform'd; when all the celestial Bodies should have finished their Courses, and be come about to the same Point of the Heavens, and the same Position with regard to each other they were in when first created. And that when this great Round of Time should be performed, a Restoration of the moral World likewise should at the same time ensue, and universal Nature should be recover'd from all its Disorders, and reinstated in its pristine happy Condition. Accordingly this Doctrine is called by the Names of *Αποκατάστασις*, and *Αποκατάστασις κοσμική*, which what else is it than *St Peter's* *Αποκατάστασις πάντων*? *Acts* iii. 21. of which I shall hereafter offer an Explanation.

It is likewise call'd *Παλιγγενεσία*, the Scripture-Term, whereby the Regeneration or Renovation of our Natures is expressed.

It is observable that *Plato*, who was a great Espouser of this Doctrine, from whom, as the supposed Author of it, it is sometimes called the

the Renovation of the World. 217

the *Platonick-Tear*—it is to be observed, I say, that he placeth this grand Instauration of all Things before the general Conflagration; insomuch that he makes the Conflagration to proceed from this as its Cause: Tho' Dr *Burnet*, to suit it to his Scheme, would fain confound both together.*

How agreeable the divine *Plato's* Sentiments are to Scripture in this respect, as well as they are known to be in others, will appear, when the Scripture-Doctrine relating hereto, comes under Consideration.

The *Stoicks*, indeed, suppose a new World after the Conflagration; but this Opinion is not so universal as the former; nor, if it were, would it be at all inconsistent with it: On the contrary, this, as well as the other, seems to have some Countenance from Scripture, as there may hereafter be Occasion to shew.

We have only now to enquire what the Sense of the primitive Christians was in this Matter. And it is well known, that most of the antient Fathers of the Church held a Renovation and Restoration of the World. The constant and every-where-repeated Opinion of *Irenæus* is, 'That we are to recover the same Happiness in the second *Adam*, which we lost in the first.' And *Justin Martyr*, in his Dialogue with *Trypho* the Jew, tells him, 'That he himself, and all orthodox Christians, unanimously maintain'd the Felicity of the last Age of the World'. Which Testimony,

* See *Burnet's Theory*. Vol. 2. B. 3. ch. 8.

218 *Opinion of the Antients.*

ny, as it contains a Cloud of Witnesses, renders the Addition of more quite needless and superfluous. This Opinion they held under the Notion of a *Millennium*; which they conceived to be a State of the greatest Peace, Plenty, and all Manner of Felicity imaginable. But as I shall hereafter have Occasion to shew more particularly what their Notion of a *Millennium* was—what Mistakes they were in about it—and how they fell into those Mistakes—I shall wave this Matter at present, and proceed to the Consideration of other Arguments.

P. A. H.

CH A P. X.

Wherein it is proved, that this Hypothesis, which maintains the Restoration of the World to its original Perfection, before its final Dissolution, is agreeable to our Notions of the Attributes of GOD, to the Nature of Man, and Reasons of Things.

OUR Enquiries have hitherto been chiefly employ'd about Fact and History: We come now to examine the Subject of them by the Touchstone of Reason. This, it must be own'd, is of it self but a very uncertain Guide in the Case before us, it not being safe to conclude, from what *we* conceive suitable for GOD to do, that it *shall* certainly be done, were there nothing else to support this Reasoning. But tho' this carries not the Weight of a sole or principal Argument, yet it may be used as a concurrent or subsidiary one: And especially, when GOD, by what he hath already done, signifies what he intends to do, and has moreover told us, as will appear hereafter, what he *will* do, we may in this Case venture to
speak

220 *This Hypothesis agreeable to*

Speak after him, and say, that That is suitable to be done.

We may, therefore, take Confidence, and assert, that the Restoration of the World to its native State of Order and Perfection, is a Work every way worthy of God, and suitable to the Wisdom, Power, Dominion, Justice, Honour, and Goodness of the divine Being.

For though the Almighty Creator, in his infinite Wisdom, thought fit to permit his Works to be disturb'd and put out of their regular Courses for a Time; yet the Notion we have of the same Wisdom, will not give us leave to think, that it will be always so, and that he will permit his Power to be insulted to the End, and the Designs of his Providence to be finally perverted and triumph'd over by his rebellious and apostate Creatures. For what can be more worthy of his Wisdom to contrive, or of his Power to effect, than to vindicate his own Works from the Abuse they have suffer'd? It is no more than what in Justice he seems to owe to himself, to make the World, the Workmanship of his Hands, to appear once more in its native Beauty and Perfection, and to assert that Dominion over it with which in Right of Creation he is invested. Is it to be conceived, that God should suffer his Glory to be thus eclipsed, in its Dawn, as it were—in the Morning of Time—and that it will not emerge and appear again in its first Brightness

ness, till Time be set in the Ocean of Eternity? Is it not rather to be supposed, that it will break through this Cloud in which it is now benighted, and appear with double Lustre? He who is so jealous of his Honour, and has declared he will not *give* it to another, will hardly be content to be *robb'd* of it. As his own Glory, and the Good of the Creatures he made, were the great Ends for which GOD framed the World at first, so it is not to be doubted but these Ends upon the Whole, will still be most effectually promoted, by those very Means which to us seem to have a quite contrary Tendency.

It is a favorite Maxim in the divine Politics to bring Good out of Evil; and by how much greater both the Good is, and the Evil out of which it is brought, by so much the more does it tend to display that darling Attribute of his, his Goodness: Now I need not add, that more Good is brought out of the Evil of the Fall, according to this Notion of our Redemption from it, than any other.

Indeed it is offering Violence to Reason to suppose, that he who is the GOD of Order, and not of Confusion, will suffer Confusion finally to prevail. On the contrary, it is most natural to think, that he will adjust and compose every Difference, reform what is irregular, reduce what is out of Course, correct what is erroneous, complete what is imperfect, fill up what is wanting, and in every respect rectify

222 *This Hypothesis agreeable to*

tise what is amiss both in the natural and moral World. For if God once brought Order out of Confusion, and caused a most beautiful and regular System to arise out of an uninform'd indigested *Chaos*, why may, and will he not do the like again? Is it more difficult to *reform* the World, than it was at first to *form* it?—To mend than to make it? Or is it not easier to restore Things to their first State of Harmony; than to produce Harmony where there was none before?

If a curious Piece of Clock-work be put out of Order, by Accident or Design, and be capable of being repair'd, and perhaps improved beyond what it was before, the Artist who made it will undoubtedly think his Skill well bestowed for that purpose. And that the present State of Things is not so bad, as to render them incapable of being set at Rights, and restored to their original Perfection, is evident, tho' from no other Consideration, yet from this, that God Almighty continues them so long in Being; for which no other Reason worthy of him can be assign'd.

No Physician of Character will continue prescribing for a Patient, and keep him upon his Hands, when at the same Time he despairs of his Recovery; and had the Shock of the Fall been so terrible, as not to admit of a Cure, or Possibility of recovering from it, I cannot help thinking that all Things would have been immediately dissolved, and we should long ago, have had new Heavens, and a new Earth

Earth in their stead. But on the contrary we may observe that all Parts of Nature are endued with a Principle not only to preserve their State, but to advance it, and *that every Thing has a Tendency to its own Perfection.* This is a general Law impress'd upon Nature, which must at length attain its End, unless we suppose that Nature, or rather its Author, doth some Things in vain, and particularly that this Law is given and operates to no End. In a Word, either this World, as it is at present, is capable of being alter'd for the better, and restored to its original Beauty, Order, and Harmony, in all and every Part, or it is not: If not, why is it continued so long in Being? If it be, we have all the Reason in the World to expect, that a good and gracious God will in his good Time bring it to pass.

‘But the Continuance of the World so long without any remarkable Change for the better,’ as the Objector will suppose, ‘may be rather thought an Argument of the contrary. *Where is the Promise of his Coming said the Scoffers of Old, 2 Pet. iii. 4. save that the Fathers are fallen asleep, all Things continue as they were from the Beginning.* He that made the World in six Days, might surely have repaired its Breaches in less than 6000 Years, if he had been minded to have done it at all: But since he has delay'd it so long, it is to be presumed he never intends it.’

Now, that it is wrong to suppose the
World

224 *This Hypothesis agreeable to*

World is not considerably reform'd and improved, I have already shewn at large in the foregoing Chapters. Notwithstanding, it must be owned, that at first Sight it is matter of Wonder, that the Works of the Creation, which were finished in so short a Time, could be thrown so much out of Order by any created Power, as not to be reduced to their first Harmony and Regularity in the Course of such a Number of Ages as have since passed. But if the Matter be consider'd a little more nearly, our Wonder will cease: *For we must not be ignorant of this, that one Day with the Lord is as a 1000 Years, and a 1000 Years as one Day—The Lord is not slack, as Men count Slackness.* 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9. All Time is alike to him, and bears the same Proportion to Eternity, which is none at all. He for his part, could instantly have set all at Rights again, but the *Remora* is owing altogether to ourselves. When he made the World, he had only lifeless Matter to work upon, the Laws of which being few and simple, occasioned no Delays, and therefore he had nothing to do, but to issue out his Almighty *Fiat*, and at once to speak it into Being. But when the World came to need his Hand a second Time, the Case was alter'd. The great Machine was then in Motion, and Nature alive in all its parts, conducted by an infinite Variety of second Causes, and these again subjected to an infinite Variety of
Laws

Laws, which the great Author of Nature had imposed upon it.

The World was also stock'd with various kinds of Inhabitants, the chief of which was Man, a compound Being, endowed with Freedom of Will. Therefore the Laws relating to him must be more compounded and complicated in their Nature, and all consistent with his native Liberty.

Now, as GOD governs all Things according to their Natures, the Laws of Nature must be the Rules of his Conduct, in his Redintegration of the World, otherwise it would be *destroying* instead of *restoring*: And particularly, no one Measure could be taken that violated or infringed human Liberty.

Therefore, as the Reformation of the World is not in the Nature of the Thing to be completed by GOD alone, but requires the joynt-concurrence of many others—As there are several Parties that must be concern'd in it, and contribute their Parts towards it—In this View of the Matter the Renovation of the World seems to be a more tedious and operose Task than the first Creation of it, tho' that bespeaks the greatest Exertion of Power. But in Truth, both are equally above our Comprehensions, and both equally easy to him in themselves.

The only Difference is, that in the one Case He acted alone, in the other, the Concurrence of his Creatures is necessary; and therefore GOD, by the Laws of his Conduct,

226 *This Hypothesis agreeable to*

cannot proceed any faster in this great Work than Man co-operates with him. In the Nature of the Thing it can advance but by slow Degrees, and that it goes on no faster, proves nothing but the long-suffering of God, and Perverseness of Man. How long this Forwardness will continue, is among the Secrets of the Almighty, who alone sees the Hearts of all Men that are, and are to be; and what Degrees of Depravity are to be overcome in each; but that an universal Renovation will at length take place, can admit of no Doubt, unless we think the Goodness, the Wisdom, the Power of God must yield to the Wickedness of Man. Moreover,

Why was the first and best Scene of the World so short, that it pass'd away like a Dream or Shadow, if it never is to come on the Stage again? Why were only one Man and Woman admitted to be Spectators of it, and all future Generations not only for ever deprived of enjoying it, but moreover mortified with the Description of what had been so entertaining to behold and bear a Part in? Surely the Conclusion of this great *Drama* will not fall so far short of its Beginning! It must end with universal Applause; but how can it end so, if it ends worse than it began? The consummate Wisdom of the great Contriver and Conductor of it will not permit such a Thought.

‘What,’ says a late Writer, who seems to be no hearty Friend to Revelation—‘What could

‘could *Tully* have judged of the Formation of
‘a Paradise, and all that *Apparatus* and Pro-
‘vision for the Bliss and Immortality of the
‘first Pair; which was no sooner made than
‘forfeited, and like a theatrical Scene, chan-
‘ged in an Instant to a Prospect of Misery
‘and Barrenness *?’—Why, presented thus
simply and abstractedly in itself, I believe he
would have been at a Loss what to have
judged of it. But should you tell him, that
this State was design’d for Man throughout
the whole Period of the World’s Existence—
that he very early and unhappily turned
himself out of it—but that *GOD*, notwith-
standing, from that very Moment, hath been
contriving, and continually making proper
Dispositions for his Restoration to it—and
that, as soon as his own Perverseness yields to
it, he shall be actually so restored, and secu-
red in the Enjoyment of it, till the End of
Time—In this View of the Matter, *Tully*
would be so far from thinking the Formation of
Paradise a vain Work, without any final Cause,
and would be so far from censuring the Im-
mutability of *GOD* upon that Account, that
he would be presently struck with a profound
Admiration of the Length and Breadth,
Depth and Height of the divine Wisdom and
Goodness in this great Work, and would have
left us some fine Reflection to this Purpose.
And it is to be hoped, that *The learned Wri-
ter of his Life*, when he seriously considers it,

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will

* Letter to Dr *Waterland*, &c.

228 *This Hypothesis agreeable to*

will be no less affected with a pious Adoration of it.

To draw to a Conclusion of this Argument. He who has the Reins of the World's Government in his Hands, will undoubtedly guide it at length into its right Course, and improve it to the perfect Model after which he at first framed it. He whose Providence interests it self so much in the Conservation of all Things, will surely think their Reformation likewise at least equally worthy of his Regard: Nor will he content himself with reforming by Halves, but will in the End make it a perfect Work. On the other Hand, if the Continuation of all Things in their present State furnishes an Argument in Proof of a Providence, how is this Argument strengthen'd and improved on Supposition of a *Melioration*? In a Word, he who is Goodness itself will surely heal all the Maladies and Evils of the World, and convert every Thing into Good.

Thus we see how all the Attributes of God are concern'd for the Recovery of the World to its first State, and how the Reasons of Things concur therewith.

Let us now see how agreeable this Notion is to the Nature of Man. And what can be more natural to suppose, than, that Man shall be what he was before? That he shall get the better of an old hereditary Distemper? Shall overcome an infirm sickly Constitution, derived to him from his Ancestors; and by a
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proper Care and Regimen be restored to perfect Health, Vigour and Vivacity? It is a common Aphorism, that what has been may be: And a very wise Man goes farther, and says,—that *the Thing which hath been is that which shall be*—and that *there is no new Thing under the Sun.* Eccles. i. 9. And again, Ch. iii. 15, *That which is to be hath already been, and GOD requireth, or (according to the Vulgate) reneweth that which is past. Deus instaurat quod abiit.* It will then be no new, nor unnatural Thing for Man to regain his first Situation and become the Creature that GOD made him.

This cannot surely be thought an extravagant Fancy, to suppose Man, not to change his Nature, but to perfect it. It is not supposing him to be changed into a *Cherub* or *Seraph* (tho' that is not too great a Change to be hoped for in a future State) but to continue mere Man still, or rather to become more a Man than he was before. As this is a State which Mankind has been once in, the Case is different, and the Recovery of it much easier, than if we had been to attain some exalted State we never were in before. For since Man fell from his original Innocence, why may he not rise to it again? The Distance and Transition being the same from a supposed State of Corruption, to a supposed State of Righteousness; as from the like State of Righteousness, to the like State of Corruption. In a Word, this Supposition has nothing

230 *This Hypothesis agreeable to*

difficult or supernatural in it, except that it requires supernatural Aid to bring it to pass; it being really no more than what is every Way rational and suitable to our Nature, and perfective of it, and what we may well conceive our natural Powers able to produce, when strengthen'd and assisted by divine Grace.

In most other Cases Men are apt to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think, and they are rarely known to err on the contrary Side: And yet in this respect they are humble to a Fault, being possess'd with a strange Prejudice against themselves and their own Abilities: Nor is it the most inconsiderable Misfortune occasioned by the Fall, that Man should despair of recovering from it, this being the Way effectually to prevent it. There is no greater Injury done to human Nature, than to have this mean Opinion of it. *Falsò queritur de Naturâ suâ Genus humanum quod imbecillis sit.* * All those Complaints which are made of the Weakness of human Nature are for the most part false and groundless, and are more justly chargeable on our own Indolence: For had we but Industry to make a due Application of our Faculties, we should find that we wanted nothing else; the greatest Differences which appear between one Man and another having been observed to proceed generally from this single Virtue; but a languid Diffidence is ever a fatal

* *Salust. Bell. Jugurth.*

tal Enemy to great Attainments. 'Men seem,' says Lord *Bacon*, 'neither well to understand their Riches, nor their Strength; of the former they believe greater Things than they should, and of the latter much less.' And from hence certain fatal Pillars have bounded the Progress of Learning,*—and, we may add, of Improvement in general.

As it is more for the Honour of our Nature to think the best of it, so this Principle alone carried into Practice would go a great Way towards proving itself. For many there are who, with a moderate share of Abilities, have by Dint of Resolution and Application, made themselves Masters of Attainments, which at first exceeded their utmost Hopes and Expectations, and which greater Genius's never had the Courage to attempt. And if Men would use the same Diligence in correcting the Depravity and Viciousness of their Natures, as they do in mastering other Difficulties, it would appear how far human Nature were able to go towards Perfection. Discoveries and Improvements have been made in these latter Ages in several Arts and Sciences, which to former Times seem'd as impossible, and as far beyond the Powers of Man, as what I am arguing for can seem to any one now: And no doubt but there are Discoveries reserved for future Ages, of which we at this Time never dream. The Use I would make of this Reflection here

232 *This Hypothesis agreeable to*

is only this, that we ought not to be too diffident of our selves, nor too rash in undervaluing the Abilities of human Nature, and the Talents with which GOD hath endow'd us.

I shall conclude this Head and Chapter with the Opinion of a great Man of our own, of the last Age, who, from his own Experience, ought to be allowed capable of forming a good Judgment of the Matter in Hand: I mean the *Honourable Mr Boyle*; part of whose excellent Character it is, 'That he had great Notions of what human Nature might be brought to.'* And it is much to be regretted that any of his Notions should be lost, but especially, that he was discouraged from propagating his Notions in this respect, by the Incapacity, as he complain'd, of Mankind to receive them. This Consideration, I must own, is a great Condemnation of the Rashness of this Undertaking, which perhaps had been prevented and render'd unnecessary, had he made his Thoughts known to the World.

However, as he himself was one of the greatest Instances of the Capacity and Improvement of human Nature, which the Age he lived in, or any other ever produced; this Judgment of his was probably form'd upon the Experience of his own extraordinary Attainments; none of which, however considerable they were in other respects, refined and ennobled his Mind to so great a Degree as the remarkable Heights in Piety and Religion, to

* See his Funeral Sermon by Bishop *Burnet*, p. 25.

to which he advanced. Concerning which it is observed, 'That it shews Men in the simplest and most convincing of all Arguments, what the human Nature is capable of, and what the Christian Religion can add to it—how far it can both reward and exalt it.* And a little before, 'what a Thing would Mankind become, if we had many such?' Would it not then incline us to think that the Recovery of human Nature is not impossible?

* *ib.* p. 28.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Wherein it is shewn, That the Christian Religion, in the general Design and Tendency of it, is calculated for the Recovery of fallen Man to his primitive State.

THE Arguments which have been hitherto used in Behalf of this Doctrine, were design'd only as Auxiliaries to the main Force, which lay behind, and is now advancing. As it is the holy Scripture alone which gives an Account of the Fall of Man, it is upon the Scripture we must build our Hopes of Recovery, which alone can afford any certain Light concerning this Matter. To the Scripture therefore let us repair, '*To the Law, and to the Testimony.*' Isa. viii. 20. And let the present Hypothesis either stand or fall by it.

The last Dispensation that either hath been, or will be vouchsafed unto Men, is the Gospel. It is then in Virtue of the Gospel Dispensation, that human Nature shall recover its lost Estate, if it is to be recovered at all. Let us therefore examine how far our Saviour Christ doth propose, and the Gospel doth afford a Remedy for the Corruption of our Nature ;

The Tendency of Christianity 235

ture ; and what Foundation it yields to believe, that Man shall be restored by it to the same Perfection in which he was created. And as we are now come to the Merits of the Cause, I shall be the more particular in the Examination of it.

In order hereto, let us consider, first, the *Nature* and *Design* of Christianity in general, the *Use* and *End* for which it is intended.

And this will appear to be none other, than the rebuilding of the Ruins of our Nature ; healing the Diseases of our immortal Souls ; the purifying and refining of them from the Corruptions they are defiled with ; repairing the divine Image in them ; and restoring both them, and the Tabernacles they sojourn in, to their primitive Integrity and Soundness : Which as it is the noblest and most generous Design in itself, and the most worthy of its Author, so is it the profess'd Design of the Gospel, as is visible from the whole Scope and Tenor of it.

For this Purpose it was that the Son of God took human Nature upon him, *viz.* to sanctify, elevate, and ennoble it by its Union with the divine ; and applied to it the Merits of his own Sufferings, in order to expiate its Guilt, and to reinstate it in the Favour of God, and its primitive Innocence. This was the End for which, as the Apostle declares, he gave himself for us, *viz.* *That he might redeem us from ALL Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works.*

236 *The Tendency of Christianity*

Works. Tit. ii. 15. With this View He likewise gave us a most divine Body of Laws, in their own Nature admirably fitted for this End, recommended by his own most holy Example, enforced by the most powerful Sanctions, and furnish'd with such external Means, and internal Assistances, as will enable us to perform them. Accordingly, very great Effects are ascribed to the Gospel, with regard to the Reformation of the World. It is called *the Power of God unto Salvation.* Rom. i. 16. And the Gospel-Age is call'd *the Time of Reformation.* Heb. ix. 10. and *the Regeneration.* Mat. xix. 28. And Christianity is represented as a very exalted State, as a State of great Attainments both in Knowledge, and Sanctity of Mind and Manners. Thus the Light of the Gospel is every where in Scripture spoken of in very high Terms, as it really has brought great Light into the World; and Christians are supposed to be greatly illuminated in their Minds, and said to be *filled with the Knowledge of God's Will, in all Wisdom and spiritual Understanding.* Col. i. 9. And, ch. iii. 10. *having put on the new Man, to be renewed in Knowledge after the Image of him that created him.*

So likewise in respect of Holiness, we are said to be *purged and purified from our Sins—to have escaped the Corruption which is in the World through Lust—that Christ may present us holy and unblameable, and unreprieveable in his Sight.* Col. i. 22. And lest we should imagine that the Improvement and Reformation

tion supposed to be wrought in us by Christianity, amounts to no more than some partial Alteration for the better, we are given to understand, that it is design'd to work a thorough Change in us. Thus it is represented as a State of *Regeneration*, or *new Birth*; of *Renovation*, or *new Creation*: Which several Terms suppose a State of greater Purity than the present, from which we are departed, and to which by our Regeneration or Renovation, we are to be restored. Thus, *if any Man be in Christ*, he is said *to be a new Creature*. 2 Cor. v. 17. Nay, that to this End, it is absolutely necessary we should be *regenerated and born again*. Jo. iii. 3.—*that we put off the old Man, be renew'd in the Spirit of our Mind, and put on the new Man, which after GOD is created in Righteousness and true Holiness*. Eph. iv. 22. so again, we are said, *to be wash'd, to be sanctified, to be justified, in the Name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our GOD*. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Now, to be sanctified, in the proper Sense of the Word, is to be made holy; and to be justified, is to be made just: Nor are we any farther sanctified or justified in Christ, than we become actually holy and just in our Lives, and are cloathed with real and inward Righteousness. Some Divines have fancied an imputative kind of Righteousness, and that we are no otherwise justified than as the Righteousness of Christ is imputed, and, as it were, transferr'd to us: But this Notion of Justification

238 *The Tendency of Christianity*

cation has been shewn to have no Foundation in Scripture, and to be attended with dangerous Consequences.* Indeed, in some Places of Scripture, Justification signifies being accounted just thorough the Merits of our Saviour, when we are not really so in ourselves. And this is a very necessary Sense of it, because in this Sense only it is, that Sinners, as all Men in this imperfect State are, can be justified at all. But then they are no farther justified even in this Sense, nor receive the Rewards of Justification, than in Proportion to their several Attainments of real and inherent Righteousness. And this, as I said, is what is meant by Justification, in the strict and proper Notion of the Word, *viz.* actual and inherent Righteousness. And in this its proper Sense, it is necessarily to be understood in several Places of holy Writ, as in *James ii. 21, 24.* and *Rev. xxii. 11.* Since then the holy Scriptures promise and undertake to justify and sanctify the Disciples of Christ in the proper Sense of the Words, our holy Religion hath undoubtedly in itself Virtue and Efficacy sufficient for that Purpose: *viz. to make us holy as he is holy, and righteous, as he is just and righteous*; and will accordingly render us so, and *save us to the uttermost*, when we cooperate with it, and permit it to have its perfect Work.

Moreover, we are taught, that there is a mystical Union and Communion between
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* See Bishop Bull's *Examen censurae*, &c.

Christ and his Church—that he esteems it as his *Body*, and Christians in particular, as his *Members*; whose Bodies are likewise call'd, the *Temple of the Holy Ghost*, to which, when fitted for his Reception, we are assured he will vouchsafe his Presence in so intimate and effectual a manner, that it is expressed by his *Dwelling* and *Residing* in them. These are some of those *exceeding great and precious Promises* which are given us, that, in Virtue of them, *we may be Partakers of the Divine Nature*. 2 Pet. i. 4. and be made the *Sons of God*: All which must give us very exalted Notions of the Power and Influence of our most holy Religion, and of those high Degrees of Excellence, to which our Nature, in Virtue of it, is capable of being advanced.

But, which is more to my Purpose, the Design of Christianity is in Scripture set forth to be the Perfection of our Nature; and accordingly it is, in its most advanced State, represented as a State of Perfection. That this is the Design of it is occasionally shewn by the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*; who, to convince them of the superior Excellence of the Christian Religion and the Necessity of its Institution, makes a Comparison between it and the Law of *Moses*, in which he shews the Defects and Insufficiency of the one, and the Perfection and Sufficiency of the other. For thus he argues, ch. vii. 11. *If Perfection were of the Levitical Priesthood, what further Need was there, that another Priest should*

240 *The Tendency of Christianity*

should rise after the Order of Melchisedec? implying undoubtedly, that Perfection was to be attain'd under the Priesthood of this latter Order. But v. 19. he expresses himself in more direct and positive Terms. *For the Law made nothing* (i. e. no Man) *perfect, but the bringing in of a better Hope*—Our Translation adds—*did*. But I should chuse to supply the design'd Omission of the Verb in the original by—*shall do, or, is capable of doing*; since this is not actually done, or effected as yet. To the same Purpose he reasons, ch. x. 1. *For the Law having a Shadow of good Things to come, and not the very Image of the Things, can never with those Sacrifices, which they offer'd Year by Year continually, make the Comers thereunto perfect*. On the other hand, speaking of Christ, he says, *By one Offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*, v. 14. And the same Design is persued throughout the Epistle.

That Perfection is the Design of Christianity, is evident from other Parts of Scripture. Thus, the Use and End of Scripture in general is said to be, *That the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnish'd unto all good Works*. 2 Tim. iii. 17. And the Christian Ministry was instituted for no other End, than the *perfecting of the Saints, the Work of the Ministry, the edifying of the Body of Christ; till we all come unto a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ*; Eph. iv. 12, 13.

Accordingly, the great Design of our Saviour's

to restore fallen Man. 241

viour's coming is said to be, in order to promote and perfect an exact Obedience to the whole Body of the moral Law; as he himself informs us, that *He came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it.* Matt. v. 17. and that, not only by paying a full and perfect Obedience to it himself, but by requiring and enabling his Disciples likewise to fulfill it in such a manner, as is evident from the following Part of the Chapter; where he lays down the Precepts in a stricter Sense than they were before understood to have: And what may serve as a Confirmation hercof, St. Paul likewise tells us, that the End of God's sending his Son was, *That the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in, or rather, by us* (as it may be translated, more agreeably to the Context) *who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.* Rom. viii. 4.

Agreeably hereto, Christianity, in its most advanced State, is, as I said before, represented as a State of Perfection. Thus Christians, as soon as the Foundation of their Religion is laid, and the first Principles of it learn'd, are exhorted *to go on unto Perfection.* Heb. vi. 1. And that we may the better understand what is meant by that Word, St James comments upon it, ch. i. 4. where he exhorts his Jewish Converts, *to let Patience have her perfect Work, that they might be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.* And St Peter. 1 Ep. v. 10. where he prays in this manner—*The God of all Grace make you perfect, stablish,*
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242 Christianity calculated for

strengthen, settle you. And St Paul, Col. iv. 12. where he tells them that, Epaphras labour'd fervently for them in Prayer, that they might stand perfect and complete in all the Will of GOD. And to mention no more, our Saviour gives us an express Command to this purpose, Matt. v. 48. *Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.* Where we see there are no Bounds set to this Duty, but we are to imitate and aspire to the Perfection, not of Angels, or any created Beings, but of GOD himself, as far as the Limits of our Nature will admit.

This is to be the Study and Endeavour of Christians: Perfection is the Mark they are to aim at, which is nothing else but the moral Accomplishment of human Nature. Or, as the Roman Orator defines Virtue, '*Est virtus nihil aliud quam in se perfecta, & ad summum perducta Natura.*'* which gives us a just Idea of human Perfection. This is to be attained by a diligent Cultivation and Improvement of our Natures, and by making such a constant and vigorous Progress and Proficiency in Virtue, as at last will bring us to such a Maturity in it as Man in this Life is capable of.

But low and groveling Minds cannot look up to such Heights. 'They are startled at the very Mention of Perfection, and have entertain'd such humble Thoughts, not only of human Nature, but as it seems of divine
' Grace

* Cic. de legibus, Lib. 1.

the Recovery of fallen Man. 243

‘ Grace too, and evangelical Righteousness,
‘ that all Talk of Perfection seems to them
‘ like the preaching of a new Gospel, and an
‘ obtruding upon the World a fantastic Scheme
‘ of proud and pretended Morality.*

Is Perfection therefore only an empty Name? a mere ideal Thing, mention’d and recommended in Scripture only to amuse and tantalize us? but never seriously intended for the Attainment of weak Mortals, however peremptorily commanded and enjoyn’d? Or rather, does not this single Consideration, that it is enjoyn’d, sufficiently imply that it is attainable; since it is absurd and impious to suppose, that God would be so severe a Task-Master, as to require Brick without Straw, and impose such a Command upon his Creatures, as were either naturally or morally impossible to be fulfill’d by them?

Notwithstanding, as it is notorious in Fact, not only that the very best Christians of our own Times, but the most eminent Saints recorded in Scripture, have not been without their Failings and Infirmities, nay, have fallen into wilful Sins and those of the deepest Dye; and as so very few have been able to attain Perfection in any eminent Degree; for this Reason, the Possibility of its being attain’d by *any* is question’d not only by ordinary Christians, but moreover by many eminent Divines: And therefore several, both Antients and Moderns, who cannot be persuaded, that

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* *Lucas*, on Perfection.

244 *Christianity calculated for*

Perfection belongs to this State, are contented to place it in a Progress towards it in this Life, reserving the full Attainment of it for the next.

Now, tho' I grant, that Man is not capable of advancing to such a State in this Life, nor perhaps in the next,* as not to admit of any Improvement; yet it is needless to observe, how low and inadequate a Notion of Perfection this is, and what an imperfect Thing it makes of it. The Truth is, the mean Opinions which Men have of the Abilities of human Nature, form'd upon the poor Proficiency which they observe Christians generally to make, have occasion'd the straining of Scripture, in order to make it stoop to the present State of Religion in the World. Hereby they fix the Standard of Perfection, and Scripture is made a leaden Rule of, which they bend to their own pre-conceived Notions, instead of raising their Notions to a Conformity with it.

Nature, I own, ought to be consulted as well as Scripture; and if it be alleged, that they are not reconcileable to each other, whilst the former continues in its present infirm and corrupt State, otherwise than by interpreting Scripture-Perfection in some such a restrain'd and qualified Sense as this—I grant it: But then I should be glad to know why such a Continuance of Nature in its present corrupt State is supposed, when it is the profess'd Design of Christianity to remove it; unless we think

* See *Scot's Christian Life. Of the Law of Perfection. Part 2d. ch. vii.*

think it an insufficient Means for this End; or that God will suffer his own Designs to be defeated.

Various have been the Disputes which, from St *Austin's* Days to the present, have been agitated between several Sects and Denominations of Christians, concerning Perfection and the Attainableness of it: The chief Ground of which I take to have been the Supposition, that human Nature is not generally capable of rising above its present Level. And, therefore, those who have form'd the highest Notions of Perfection—have pretended most to it—have most strongly recommended it to others, and pleaded for the Attainableness of it, have met with so little Success; but have generally been look'd upon as not much better than Enthusiasts; and their Labours have either tended to make others such, or have been received with Coldness and Indifference, if not rejected with Contempt. And indeed, while we suppose the present Degeneracy of human Nature to be invincible, we cannot form any Notion of human Perfection, but what necessarily includes a Contradiction in it. For, either we must suppose it greatly alloy'd with Imperfection, which destroys the very Idea of it; or, if we understand it in its just Sense and full Import, we must, by the Supposition, give up the Attainableness of it. So that all Talk about Perfection must, on this Supposition, be absurd and idle, and all Pretences to it must become airy and chimerical.

246 *Christianity calculated for*

But if, on the other hand, we suppose, that Nature shall by Degrees be so refined by Grace, as at length to be fully recover'd of its present Disorders ; then all Difficulties immediately vanish, and we may easily apprehend what is meant by Christian Perfection in its full Extent ; this being but another Word for the Recovery of the original Perfection of our Nature, to which, when it is arrived at its full Height, I conceive it will be in no respect inferior.

This, and this alone, in strict Propriety of Speech, deserves the Name of human Perfection : But as Perfection admits of Degrees, and as there are several intermediate Stages of it, through which we must pass in our Progress towards it, our Arrival at any of these may, in a lower and less proper Sense, be term'd a State of Perfection, and the higher we climb, the more perfect we shall be ; till at length we are safely arriv'd at, and firmly establish'd in, the highest and most consummate Pitch of it, from which at first we fell.

That human Nature shall in this Life arrive at such a complete State of Perfection as this, besides what hath been already observ'd, may be farther argued from the Consequences of the opposite Opinion. For I conceive, that the Doctrine of the Impossibility of attaining Perfection, and Freedom from Sin, is injurious to our Saviour Christ, derogates from the Power and Virtue of his Sacrifice, and renders

the Recovery of fallen Man. 247

ders his Mission and Ministry, as to the main End of it, in a great Measure ineffectual.

For Christ, among other Ends, appear'd principally for this, *viz.* to remove and *make an End of Sin, to finish Transgression, and to bring in everlasting Righteousness.* Dan. ix. 24. Hence he is said to have given himself for us, *that he might redeem us from ALL Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar, or* (as the Word *περίσβιος* may as justly, but in a more enlarged Sense, be render'd) *an excellent People, zealous of good Works.* Tit. ii. 14. This Redemption from *all* Iniquity must be made in this Life, as appears from the Character of this *excellent* People, that they are to be *zealous of good Works*, for which this is the proper Season; as we are told, *that we must work the Lord's Work while it is called Day, because when the Night cometh no Man can work.*

Therefore to affirm, that we are never to be purified or redeem'd from *all* Iniquity in this Life, is to contradict the Apostle, and to make Christ's giving himself for us, in a great Measure void and ineffectual. Moreover, it is said expressly by St. John, as a known Truth, *that for this Purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might take away our Sins, and destroy the Works of the Devil.* 1 Jo. iii. 5, 8.

We are likewise told, that *all Power is given unto him in Heaven and Earth*, for this Purpose, and that *He is able to subdue all*
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248 *Christianity calculated for*

Things unto himself. Therefore, if we deny the Possibility of these Ends being attain'd, we overturn the Doctrine of Christ, and are injurious to the Power and Efficacy of his Appearance.

It being, therefore, evident from hence, that Perfection, not only *may*, but *shall* be attain'd by Mankind in Virtue of the Gospel, however short of it they generally are as yet: I proceed now to shew, that Christian Perfection shall be equal to original Perfection, and evangelical to original Righteousness; which I shall endeavour to do from certain Marks and Characteristicks of our most holy Religion, as well as from the constituent Parts of it.

I. This may be argued from the Character, Office and Example of our Saviour Christ.

And,

1. From his Character and Office as a REDEEMER, and from the Nature of that REDEMPTION which he wrought for us.

It will not be disputed by any who believe the Divinity of Christ, and allow of a Redemption wrought by him, but that it must be full, perfect, and complete in itself, and that, as our Church expresses it, our Saviour Christ, 'by his one Oblation of himself, once offer'd, made a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World.' This, I say, tho' it be virtually denied, is not openly disputed, even by the *Papists* themselves.

Now,

the Recovery of fallen Man. 249

Now, as our Saviour has paid down the full Price of our Redemption, commutative Justice requires, that our Redemption should be full and complete likewise. Indeed, if any thing on his part were left undone—If he had not fully atoned and satisfied for all our Sins, original and actual—If he had fail'd in his Obedience in any particular—If any one *Yot* or *Tittle* of the Law had not been fulfill'd—In a Word, if he had been defective in any one Branch of his Office of Mediator, or Redeemer, that had been an unsurmountable Obstacle in our Way.

But since he did not give up the Ghost till he cried, *It is finish'd*—Since he accomplished every Thing written in the Law and Prophets, and wrought a full and perfect Redemption for us—have we not Reason to think, that he will make the utmost Advantage of it in our Behalf? And that he will, as our Advocate and Intercessor, insist upon the Right, which he purchased at so dear a Rate? Undoubtedly he will: *For our Redeemer is strong, and he will thoroughly plead our Cause.* Jer. l. 34. Since he hath undertaken our Deliverance, he will undoubtedly complete it effectually, and in his due Time bring it to a perfect Work.

Now, it may not be amiss to enquire with Modesty and Humility, as especially becomes us when we enter into the Disquisition of the great Mystery of our Redemption—it may not, I say, be amiss thus to enquire, Whether

250 *Christianity calculated for*

ther according to the common Notion of Redemption, it fully answers what may be thus reasonably expected from it.

A Redemption of Persons supposes a State of some great Evil: Captivity, for instance, or Slavery, into which they are fallen, and from which its Business is to set them free, and re-instate them in the same Circumstances and Situation they were in before. Now Mankind, by the Transgression of our first Parents, are supposed to have fall'n into such an evil State, a State of Captivity and Slavery of the worst sort, the Captivity and Slavery of Sin; which they are *bound to obey in the Lusts thereof*, and thereby become obnoxious to Death, and all the other ill Consequences of it, temporal and eternal. This is the State, and these the Evils, from which the Redemption of Mankind by *Jesus Christ* undertakes to deliver them; which, according to the above Definition of Redemption, it ought completely to do, and to restore them to the State they were in before they fell. Let us, therefore, examine how far our Redemption, as it is commonly understood, may be said to be productive of these Effects?

The Evils of the Fall may be consider'd as twofold, *viz.* temporal and spiritual: And yet our Redemption in the common Notion of it, is not supposed to be design'd as a Remedy for the temporal Evils of it at all, but for the spiritual only: Tho' one would think, that what is proposed as a Cure for the greater Evil

vil, might at the same Time remove the less. But because all *Adam's* Posterity have hitherto experienced themselves liable to Labour and Sorrow, Pain, Sicknes, and Death; therefore they conclude it always will be so, and that *GOD* never in the least intended to remove these ill Consequences of the Fall, and therefore our Redemption is not understood to extend to them. And yet, inconsistently enough, they as generally suppose it to have obtain'd a Conquest over Death; as if this were no temporal Evil, which yet is the greatest of all. But, as Scripture is so repeatedly express, with regard to our Victory over this Enemy, it could not but be taken Notice of as an Effect of our Redemption; tho' the Overcoming of Sicknes, which tends to it, and other inferior Evils of the same kind, hath been overlook'd as such, and hath not been expected from it.

2. With regard to the spiritual Evils of the Fall, our Redemption, even upon the most enlarged Scheme which Men have framed of it, notwithstanding its Universality in the Intent, yet in Reality is supposed to extend but to few; and with regard to them, not to take place, at least as to any considerable Effect, till an after-State. For tho' it is allowed to be designed as a Deliverance from the Dominion and Power of Sin here, as well as from the Guilt and Punishment of it hereafter; yet as it is the current Opinion, that no Man can arrive at a State of sinless Perfection in

252 *Christianity calculated for*

in this Life; but that all Men must more or less, continue under the Power of their Sins— If it were really so, it would follow, that our Redemption had not sufficient Efficacy to free us from Sin, as, on this Supposition, it still leaves us in some Degree of Bondage to it; although we are told, *That Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from ALL Iniquity.* And unless we are redeem'd and purified from ALL Iniquity here, we cannot, upon any rational or scriptural Grounds that I know of, be, in Virtue of our Redemption, so fully glorified hereafter, as *Adam* would have been, had he continued in his Innocence; which yet we ought to be, in order to render our Redemption from the spiritual Evils of the Fall complete, even in our future State.

On the other Hand, it must, with the utmost Gratitude be acknowledged, that supposing our Redemption should extend no farther than it is generally apprehended, and has been hitherto observed to do (as I dare not be over-positive in maintaining the contrary, or any other Opinion, wherein I happen to be singular) yet would it be infinitely greater than we deserve, or could hope for, as well as of infinite Value to us; since therein consists the main End of it, *viz.* our Restoration in a future State to a blessed Immortality both in Body and Soul. And that our Redemption hath not hitherto been attended with all those other Effects above taken Notice of, *viz.* the Removal of the temporal Evils of the Fall,

as well as the spiritual, and of these latter in a fuller and more absolute Manner, must in Justice to the Author of it be acknowledged to proceed only from the Perverseness and Obstinacy of Man, and not from any Imperfection in our Redemption itself. And hence it is, *viz.* from their Observation of the Inefficacy of it, that Christians have accustomed themselves to form no higher Notions of, nor Expectations from it—that some have confined it within such narrow Limits, and others have understood it to be a Redemption, not in the proper, but in an improper and figurative Sense, and have sunk it so low, as in a manner to explain it away, to the no small Disparagement of this great Work of our Redemption. The Design of what is here offered, and indeed of this *Essay* in general, is to endeavour as far as I am able, to rescue this great Mystery from the unworthy Representations, which have been made, and industriously propagated concerning it; to rectify all Misapprehensions of it; and to assist Christians in general to entertain juster, more consistent, and more enlarged Notions of Christian Redemption.

According to the Definition laid down above of Redemption in general, 'The Redemption of Mankind by *Jesus Christ* is a Deliverance from the Evils of the Fall, and a Re-inflating them in the same Circumstances and Situation they were in before they fell.' *i. e.* The Restoring them to the same
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254 *Christianity calculated for*

happy State in which they were at first created, in this Life ; and to the same Prospect, and future Possession of Immortality and endless Felicity, in the Life to come.

Agreeably to this Definition, my Persuasion is, that our Redemption by *Christ* will, when it hath its perfect Work, be productive of all these great and happy Effects—That the human Nature shall, before the End of the Gospel-Age and Consummation of all Things, be delivered from Sin, Sorrow, and Sickness, and all the other Miseries and Evils of this Life, proceeding from the Fall of our first Parents, and in the End, from Death itself ; without tasting of which it shall be translated from an earthly Paradise, which it shall once more enjoy, to an heavenly one, which it shall enjoy for ever. And moreover that all the Disorders of Nature in general shall be rectified, and that there shall be a Redemption of the whole Creation to its first State, as well as of Man, the Lord of it.

Now, if there be any Foundation for this Notion of our Redemption in Scripture, I presume it will not be denied but that it is the most proper and adequate, the most complete, enlarged, and exalted Idea of it that we can frame ; at least, it is more so, than what I have happen'd to meet with in any of the received Systems, or other Treatises, on the Subject. And if I mistake not, it will be
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likewise found least liable to the *Socinian* Objections against this fundamental Article of our Faith. For as this is a Redemption the most comprehensive that can be imagined, a Redemption from the Captivity and Slavery of Sin and Satan, from Banishment and from Death; and from all other Inconveniences, from which a Redemption can be thought necessary—so is it a Redemption in the most proper and absolute Sense, even such as is more so than that which *Socinus* contends for. Whose Definition of a Redemption is, *
'The Deliverance of a Person out of Captivity by the Payment of his Ransom to him whose Captive he is.' For our Redemption by *Christ* will be effected by *leading Captivity captive*—by vanquishing, imprisoning, and finally destroying the Captor himself, the grand Adversary of Mankind, in whose Chains they have for so long a Time been held captive: Wherein the Parallel which *Socinus* draws between the Redemption of the *Israelites* by *Moses*, and that of Mankind by *Jesus Christ*, holds better; as the former was wrought by the Overthrow and Destruction of their Enemies, and not by any Price paid them, which they were neither intitled to, nor in a Capacity of receiving, when destroyed. Indeed, as Man was a Debtor only to the Law, and to the Justice of God, the Satisfaction was properly to be made only to them.

But as *Socinus* and his Followers are such strenuous

* *Liberatio Captivi e Manibus Detinentis, Pretio Detinenti dato.*

256 *Christianity calculated for*

nuous Advocates for the Devil's Right to the Price of our Redemption, what if, instead of disputing it, we should, to give him his due, allow the Right, and joyn Issue with them for trying the Matter on this Footing? And what, if it should come out at last, that the Price has been paid to him, and that there is Evidence of the Payment now upon Record? Would they be any better reconciled to the Doctrine of Redemption?—The Price of our Redemption was the Death of *Christ*—He *that had the Power of Death was the Devil*, who accordingly in Virtue of this Power which was delegated to him, rigorously exacted this Price of our Saviour; and for that End made Use of the Instrumentality of wicked Men, by whose Hands, *Christ*, as knowing *their Hour, and the Power of Darkneſs* for this purpose, submitted to be crucified and slain, to discharge this Price of our Redemption; which at the ſame Time proved to be very dearly bought by Satan, as this very Thing became the Means of his Deſtruction. This is not my Argument, but St *Paul's*, *Heb. ii. 14, 15.* where his Reasoning is to this Effect. For he tells us, that *Christ* took *Fleſh*—*that through Death he might deſtroy him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil; and deliver them who through Fear of Death, were all their Life-time ſubject to Bondage.* Where the Ransom, Death, is ſuppoſed to be paid to him who had the Power of Death, and in Virtue of that Power a Right, *viz.* the

the Recovery of fallen Man. 257

the Right of Conquest, but which is the most imperfect Right of any, and as such is seldom claim'd but by Tyrants and Usurpers: But even this we see was satisfied, to obviate the Cavils which the Holy Spirit foresaw would be rais'd about it; tho' I do not know that it hath been observed by any one before.

Here then the *Socinians* may see, if their Prejudices will give them leave, a proper Redemption, on their own Principles: Or, to use the Language of one of their own Writers, whom I am willing to assist in his *Enquiry* concerning this Subject,—‘ They may ‘ here see a *literal* Redemption, of a *literal* ‘ Slave, or Person in a State of *literal* Slave- ‘ ry to a *literal* Master—and also, a *literal* ‘ Price, or valuable Consideration paid by a ‘ *literal* Redeemer, to that *literal* Master, in ‘ order to purchase this *literal* Redemption to ‘ that *literal* Captive.’ *

Moreover, from this View of our Redemption it appears how great its Efficacy will be with regard to the Dominion and Power of Sin, from which, as we have seen, it will at length entirely set us free, as indeed it ought, in order to its being complete: Accordingly, the *eternal Redemption* which Christ obtain'd for us is represented as *sanctifying, purifying, and purging the Conscience from dead Works to serve the living God.* Heb. ix. 12, 13, 14. The End of his Appearance is said to have been, *to put away Sin by the*
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* *Chubb's Enquiry concerning Redemption.* p. 80.

258 *Christianity calculated for*

Sacrifice of himself, v. 26. And, 1 Jo. i. 7, 9. his Blood is said *to cleanse us from all Sin and Iniquity*; and Jo. i. 29. He is call'd, *the Lamb of GOD that taketh away the Sin of the World*.

When it is consider'd, that our Redemption will have this powerful Effect, not on a few select Persons, but on the human Nature in general, it may help to enlarge the narrow Notions which a certain Sett of Divines have entertain'd concerning this great Work of our Salvation, and may contribute to decide the Controversy, which hath been kept so long a foot in the Christian Church, concerning the Extent and Universality of our Redemption. And that our Redemption will be attended with this Effect, in as full a manner as hath been set forth, may be inferr'd from what the Apostle intimates, *Eph. i. 14*. Where the Spirit is call'd *The Earnest of our Inheritance until the Redemption of the purchased Possession*. Which Words, as they imply that our Redemption is not complete as yet, so they contain a virtual Promise that it shall be completed hereafter, of which the Assistance of GOD's Holy Spirit is both an Earnest or Pledge, and a powerful Means of bringing it to pass: When Christ will fully assert his Claim to that his Flock which he hath purchased with his Blood, and redeem them, from all Servitude and Misery, into the perfect Liberty of the Sons of GOD; as will be
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the Recovery of fallen Man. 259

more fully and particularly made out in the following Part of this Treatise.

In the mean Time, it is some Presumption in favour of this Notion of our Redemption, that as our Saviour *Christ* hath removed so many Obstacles that lay in our Way to the Perfection, to which it is supposed we shall be restored in Virtue of it—So, I say, from what he hath already done, it may be presumed he will complete what is wanting, and *finish his Work*. Jo. iv. 34. He hath already discharged all our old Debts, and fully satisfied for our Guilt: The infinite Merits of his Blood have atoned for all our Sins, original and actual: *He hath blotted out the Hand-writing of Ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, taking it out of the Way, and nailing it to his Cross—He hath spoiled Principalities and Powers and triumph'd over them.* Col. ii. 14, 15. These Obstacles therefore need not retard us in our Progress towards Perfection. And as our Redeemer has surmounted so many Difficulties, will he not likewise assist us to overcome whatever lesser Hindrances arise from the Frailty and remaining Corruption of our Nature? So that we may at length *stand perfect and complete in all the Will of God.*

The Prophets have foretold that *the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his Wings*, and that *by his stripes we shall be healed.* Mal. iv. 2. Isa. liii. 5. And can these

260 *Christianity calculated for*

Prophecies be fully accomplished till he hath healed us effectually? Does it suit the Character of the great Physician of Souls to make a partial Cure of his Patients? Or is it not more agreeable to the Notions which Revelation hath taught us to form of him, to suppose that he will at length restore them to their original Soundness and Integrity? His Power over unclean Spirits, and of healing all manner of bodily Diseases, seems an Indication of his Power to heal the Diseases of the Soul likewise; and the miraculous Cures he wrought of the former kind, are a sort of Earnest, that He will no less effectually remove all the remaining Maladies both of Body and Soul in due Time.

2. That Man shall regain his original Rectitude and Perfection may be inferr'd, not only from the Character and Office of our Saviour as Redeemer, but likewise, as I said, from his Life and Example. For in the Man *Christ Jesus* is exemplified to us what human Nature is capable of. He was the immaculate Lamb of God that knew no Sin, and perform'd that perfect Obedience, which it was the capital Crime of our Father *Adam* to fail in. I have, in the beginning of this Treatise, p. 32. drawn a Comparison between the first and second *Adam*, and shewn that the One, not only equal'd the Other, but greatly excelled him, in that he hath exhibited to us, not only what *Adam* was in his State of Innocence, but moreover what he
might

the Recovery of fallen Man. 261

might have been advanced to, had he continued in that State. It will, therefore, be readily granted, that the human Nature in *Jesus Christ*, not only recover'd its former Loss, and was restored to its original Perfection, but that it moreover became a great Gainer, and was advanced much beyond what it was before, even in this Life.

What, therefore, Part of our Nature hath already obtain'd, that we may hope the Remainder of it shall in due Time obtain likewise: And that Portion of it, which was personally united to the divine Nature in *Christ*, being thus exalted and advanced, have we not Encouragement and Grounds to believe, that this is a sort of Earnest or First-fruits, that our Nature in general being mystically united to him, shall, in Proportion to the Strictness of the Union, and in an inferior Degree, which may at least equal that Degree of Perfection in which Man was created, be made Partaker of the like Exaltation and Advancement? *St Paul* makes use of this Argument to prove the general Resurrection, viz. *That Christ being risen from the Dead, is become the First-fruits of them that slept.* 1 Cor. xv. 20. Why then may it not be extended to prove the Resurrection of human Nature *from the Death of Sin unto the Life of Righteousness*; especially, since the Scripture teaches us that there is so great an Analogy between this and the final Resurrection?

262 *Christianity calculated for*

To this End, therefore, *viz.* *That we may be conform'd to the Image of his Son, to which GOD hath predestinated us.* Rom. viii. 29. *our Saviour hath left us an Example that we should follow his Steps.* 1 Pet. ii. 21; And as it follows in the very next verse, *who did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth.* Here indeed, it may be objected, that however diligently we may imitate, yet we must forever despair of a near Resemblance of so perfect a Pattern. Now, besides what the Apostle says, as I observed above, that we are predestinated to be conform'd to the Image of his Son, and what GOD hath predestinated will most assuredly come to pass; yet in order to a fuller Answer to this Objection, as well as for our Encouragement to follow the Steps of our Lord and Master, I shall transcribe a Passage to this purpose out of an approved Author.

‘ Though there be some Actions of our Saviour’s Life, which are never intended for our Imitation, *viz.* such wherein he either exercised or proved his divine Authority; yet whatsoever he did of precise Morality, and in Persuance of his own Laws, he designed and intended for our Imitation.’ *

With regard to which he says a little before, † ‘ Though the Example of the great Master of our Religion consists of an unspotted Innocence and perfect Virtue, yet is it every

* Scott’s Christian Life Vol. i. p. 244.

† *Ib.* p. 241. 8°. Edit.

the Recovery of fallen Man. 263

‘ every Way accommodated to the State and
‘ Condition of human Nature and Conversa-
‘ tion. For he conversed among Men with a
‘ modest Virtue, and such as was every Way
‘ consistent with an ordinary Course of Life.
‘ His Piety was even, and constant, and un-
‘ blameable, but such as fairly complied with
‘ civil Society and a secular Conversation. It
‘ affected not high Transports and Raptures
‘ of Devotion, but was such as was both fit
‘ and easy for Mortals to imitate. His Virtue
‘ consisted not in prodigious Fastings, or sour
‘ and impracticable Abstractions from Sense ;
‘ but in a Life of Justice and Temperance, of
‘ Humility and Charity, and Patience, and the
‘ like ; that is, in such a Life as is not only
‘ *proper*, but *possible* for us to transcribe. So
‘ that in his glorious Example, he hath trans-
‘ mitted to us an *imitable* Virtue ; for he took
‘ Care not to outrun the Capacities of Men
‘ in inimitable Expressions of Sanctity and
‘ Virtue ; but so far as he could innocently,
‘ complied with our Weakness, and kept pace
‘ with our Strength ; that so he might enter-
‘ tain us all along with the Comforts of his
‘ Company, and the Influence of a perpetual
‘ Guide. And as that Rule of Faith which
‘ he hath propounded to us, is fitted to our
‘ Understanding, being very short, easy, and
‘ intelligible ; so that Copy of Manners which
‘ he hath set before us, is not only fitted with
‘ Excellencies *worthy*, but also with Compli-
‘ ances *possible* to be imitated by us.’

264 *Christianity calculated for*

Our Saviour's Example therefore being all imitable, nothing hinders but that we may attain to a near Resemblance and Conformity, tho' not to a perfect Equality with it. We must allow him *the Prebeminence in all Things*. 1 Col. i. 18. which we may safely do without degrading ourselves. And as on the one Hand, we need not fear too close an Imitation of him; so on the other, as this is no more than what is practicable and feasible, we need not despair of so close a one, as will restore us to our first Estate.

But it may be still replied, that granting it possible to imitate, and even equal the moral Perfections of our Saviour, yet this would not exempt us from natural Evils, any more than it did him, *who was made in all Things like unto us*, and was obnoxious to all the Evils of Life, and even to Death itself. I answer, that those natural Evils were partly owing to outward Circumstances, in that he was placed in a World not redeem'd from the Curse of the Fall, but in a great Measure labouring under all its ill Consequences; and partly to his bearing our Transgressions, and being made Sin for us, which render'd him liable to the Effects of Sin, tho' he knew no Sin himself. For this reason it was that he suffered Death, *viz.* for our Sins; otherwise he would undoubtedly have been translated, as *Enoch* and *Elias* were, and should never have tasted of Death, as he did but taste of it.

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the Recovery of fallen Man. 265

This is sufficiently intimated in Scripture in that it says, He died for *us*; not for himself.

II. It may be inferr'd from the Nature and Genius, the Design and Tendency of the Laws and Precepts of Christianity, that we may and shall, by a due Observance of them, arrive at such a State of Perfection under the Gospel, as will equal that in which we were created. For as the End and Design of them is to oblige us to perfect Holiness, so have they an admirable Tendency to enable us for the Performance.

I. I shall consider the Nature and Design of *Christ's* Laws. I have already shewn that the Design of Christianity in general was the Reformation and Restitution of our Nature to its original Perfection. p. 235. I am to shew this now of *Christ's* Laws in particular. In order hereto let it be consider'd, wherein Man's original Perfection did consist, *viz.* in the universal Rectitude of all his Faculties, in the Subordination of his Passions to his Reason and in a due Regulation and Government of all his Appetites; or in other Words, in Righteousness and true Holiness. And is not this the great End that the Christian Religion aims to promote by all its Laws? Do not all its Precepts tend to this Point? And if they were as punctually obey'd, as they are strictly commanded, what would there be wanting to render Christian Perfection equal to the original Perfection of our Nature? For
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266 *Christianity calculated for*

does not the Gospel injoin the greatest Sanctity of Mind and Manners? Do not its Laws extend even to our Thoughts, and to the first Motions and Desires of our Souls? Is not the *Word of God quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged Sword?* Heb. iv. 12. Doth it connive at any the least *Appearance of Evil?* Or dispense with the *offending in any one Point?* *The Law of the Lord is a perfect Law*, without any Defect, and without admitting of any Evasion to which human Laws are so liable; *and his Commandment is exceeding broad*, comprehending the whole and every part of Man's Duty. Ps. xix. 7. cxix. 96. Such, in short, is the Excellency of *Christ's* Laws that they are designed to promote in Mankind all Virtue and Godliness of Living, and as one well observes, to restore them to their *primitive State*, and establish upon Earth the Practice of universal Righteousness; which would have been the Religion of Men, had they continued innocent, in Paradise; which now is the Religion of Angels, and hereafter will be the Religion of Saints in Heaven, and of just Men made perfect.

It is true, the Gospel-Covenant is a Covenant of Grace and Mercy; and tho' God Almighty requires an entire and universal Obedience to his Laws, yet at the same Time he has left us Grounds to hope, that *he will not be extreme to mark Iniquity*, but will make all equitable Allowances for the Imperfection of our Obedience,

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the Recovery of fallen Man. 267

provided it be sincere: Whence it may be inferr'd that no such Heights of Holiness are expected of us.

But to this it may be said, *that because of the Hardness of our Hearts*, and the hitherto reigning Corruption of our Natures, God Almighty suffers this Relaxation from the Rigour of his Laws; *but that from the beginning*, in the original Design of them, *it was not so*. Neither is this Lenity and Indulgence to be expected any longer than the real undissembled Necessity of our Case requires it: And tho' it doth require it at present, yet it doth not follow that it always will: Nay the Strictness and Universality of the Obedience injoyn'd, implies that it will be one Time or other in our Power to perform it, else why was it injoyn'd in such peremptory Terms? The same may be inferr'd from the Tenor of our Baptismal Covenant, in which no Provision is made for its Renewal upon our Breach of it; neither does God Almighty therein stipulate his Acceptance of an After-Repentance. And tho' we are otherwise assured of its Acceptance, yet why is it accepted of? Why does he pardon our frequent Failings and Miscarriages upon Repentance and Amendment, but in order to allow us repeated Opportunities of Tryal, to the End that we may bring our Obedience still nearer to Perfection; and daily more and more overcome the Imperfections we labour under? And as this is the End of God's Forbearance with
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268 *The Tendency of Christianity*

Individuals, we may, by Analogy of Reason, conclude the Ground of his Conduct to be the same, with regard to human Nature in general, *viz.* That by its continued Efforts, it may by Degrees overcome all Defects and Failures in its Obedience, and at length render this a perfect Work.

Supposing therefore, a Christian arrived at such Perfection, as to be able to pay a perfect Obedience to the Precepts of the Gospel, I would ask how far short such a one would be of *Adam* in his Innocence? The one is supposed to have as perfect a Law as the other, and to live as perfectly by it; and were we to sit down to draw a Parallel between both, I would fain know what might be said of the one that would not suit the other? I can conceive no other Difference between them than this, that the one preserved his Innocence; but that the other had perform'd the more difficult Task of regaining it, when it had been once lost.

2. As the Laws of the Gospel are thus holy, just, and good, so have they a natural Tendency to promote these divine Qualities in us. For Christianity doth not operate like a Charm; neither on the other hand are its Laws mere positive and arbitrary Institutions: But the wise Author of it hath so contrived it, that like other natural Causes, when duly applied, these are none other than its natural and genuine Effects, and indeed the most rational Means of reforming and perfecting our Na-

Nature: Every Rule of it, if rightly observed, hath a natural Tendency to produce one good Disposition or other in us; and we may here find an easy and effectual Remedy for every Malady we labour under. It destroys all the Seeds of Wickedness, kills every Root of Bitterness, and so corrects, sweetens, and improves the Frame and Temper of our Minds, that it gives us such a delightful Enjoyment of God, ourselves, and of each other, as cannot easily be conceived by those who have no Experience of it.

Could Christians therefore be prevail'd upon to use their utmost Endeavours to perform, with Sincerity and Zeal, the whole Will of God—If, pursuant to the Apostle's Advice, they would give all Diligence to add to their Faith Virtue—Knowledge—Temperance—Patience—Godliness—Brotherly-Kindness—Charity, 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7. human Nature would appear to be quite a different Thing from what it is at present. Were the Christian Religion suffer'd to have its perfect Work upon us, it would soon purify us from all the Corruption of our Nature, and restore us to the lost Image of our Maker. It would enlarge and ennoble our Souls, it would enlighten our Understandings, purify our Wills, and regulate our Affections. In a word, it would rectify all our Disorders, and we should become new Creatures: And such good-natured, well-disposed happy People would it make us, that were all the Christian Graces exemplified to our View
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270 *The Tendency of Christianity*

in a Society of Christians possess'd of them, we should then be experimentally convinced of the happy Fruits of the Gospel; insomuch that I am satisfied we should see little Cause to regret the Loss of Paradise.

Thus is Christianity its own Reward; it is perfective of itself, and of us too. The Use and Practice of every Art begets a Skill and Perfection in it; but much more so does it in Christianity, which being so well adapted to the Improvement of our Natures, cannot fail of producing great and happy Effects of this Kind, provided due Application be made of its Rules in general; and particularly of those instrumental Helps it affords and ordains, as the Means of obtaining all those Graces and Virtues which adorn and perfect our Natures.

These divine Appointments are,
III. Another considerable Advantage and Privilege of Christianity; as they greatly contribute to the Advancement of Virtue, and the consequent Perfection of our Natures. For, however well calculated the Precepts of our most holy Religion are for our moral Accomplishment, yet such is the Imbecillity and Depravity we labour under, that we cannot of ourselves form our Lives, according to these Precepts, without some additional Helps to this purpose. Therefore the wise Author of our Religion hath, in Aid and Supply of our Wants and Infirmities, appointed certain Means, by the due use of which we shall be enabled to perform all that he requires of us,
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for the Ends of our own Edification and Advancement. These are chiefly, *Prayer* in the Name of the Mediator, *The Word*, and *The Sacraments*; which are severally instrumental in procuring us constant Supplies of Grace; nourishing and improving Religion in us; cultivating, and strengthening our Union with Christ our Head, and with each other as his Members; and in supplying our Souls daily with renovated Vigour for the Discharge of our Duty, and enabling us to *proceed from Strength to Strength*, so as by Degrees to *run the Way of God's Commandments*. But particularly—1. Prayer, being a direct Application to the Throne of Grace, is a ready Means of obtaining that Grace for us which *worketh all in all*; and the great Efficacy of it is set forth so many Ways, by Parable, Example, and in positive Terms, that it were endless to cite Scripture in Proof of it. I shall therefore observe but one thing particularly concerning it, that in the excellent Form which our Saviour hath prescribed to his Church, he hath taught us to pray, That *GOD's Will may be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven*, i. e. that it may be obey'd in the same perfect Manner by his Servants on Earth, as it is by the holy Saints and Angels in Heaven; which Petition he never would have inserted, if what is ask'd in it were not attainable in Proportion to the Measure of Man cloathed with Flesh: And I think it moreover implies, that it will at length be actually attain'd, in as full

272 *The Tendency of Christianity*

a Measure as it is attainable ; for we cannot suppose that our Saviour Christ would direct his Church to make constant Application for any Request, which he does not intend to grant in the End. But, 2. As this Perfection of Obedience is not to be attain'd without knowing wherein it consists, so it is the Word of GOD that instructs us in this Knowledge : And how excellent a Means it is to this End, the Apostle informs us. *2 Tim. iii. 16.* where he tells us, *That all Scripture is given by Inspiration of GOD, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness ; that the Man of GOD may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works.* 3. With regard to the Sacraments of the Christian Church, I shall only observe, that Baptism is the Sacrament of our *Regeneration, or New Birth* ; whence it is called, *the Washing and Laver of Regeneration.* *Tit. iii. 5.* And the Necessity of it under this Emblem, is expressly declared by our Saviour to *Nicodemus*, *Except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of GOD.* *Jo. iii. 5.* Which sufficiently implies the Use and consequent Design of it, with regard to the renovating and purifying of our Natures ; that *cleansing ourselves from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, we may perfect Holiness in the Fear of GOD.* *2 Cor. vii. 1.* The Lord's Supper may be term'd, the Sacrament of Perfection : The Spiritual Food of those who require to be
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fed with strong Meat, in order to their Growth in Grace and Virtue, and to their speedier Progress towards that Mark, which it ought to be the Aim and Endeavour of every Christian to attain. St *Paul* teaches us to esteem the sacred Elements in the Lord's Supper, as the *Communion*, or *Communication of the Body and Blood of Christ*. 1 Cor. x. 16. which surely implies no small Degree of Efficacy for the Purposes above-mention'd, and for all good Purposes whatsoever. Wherefore our Church teaches us, 'That our Souls are hereby 'strengthened and refreshed, as our Bodies are 'by the Bread and Wine—that we dwell in 'Christ, and Christ in us and become one 'with Christ, and Christ with us.' And by virtue of this spiritual Union, we are *transform'd into his Image, and made Partakers of the divine Nature*.

All the foregoing Means of Grace have a natural Tendency to promote their Ends: But as they are the positive Institutions of our holy Religion, we have Reason to think that the Author of it is more immediately interested in their Efficacy and Success. For,

IV. He is undoubtedly concern'd for the Honour and Success of his Religion in general: And as he hath already enforced it with the most powerful Sanctions, so we may conclude, He will not cease to promote the due Observance and Influence of it, by all Methods consistent with the Liberty of Free-Agents. 'Tis true, his Laws have hitherto
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been

274 *Christianity calculated for*

been but too much neglected, despised, and even trampled upon: But are we hence to conclude that it will be always so? If that indeed be the Case, we must either infer, that they are insufficient in themselves for the End design'd by them, or else that the Law-giver is unconcern'd for their Success—That they have nothing of that Excellency in them, which I have above been endeavouring to shew; or else that they are prostituted to very unworthy Purposes, and our Saviour, contrary to his own Advice, has given *that which is holy to the Dogs, and cast his Pearls before Swine*. But as these are Suppositions too impious to make, we have nothing left but to conclude, that God will arise and vindicate his Laws from Abuse—That in his good Time he will assert their Dignity—That he will convince Mankind by Degrees, of their Worth and Excellence, and cause them to be obey'd in the love of them.

Then will they appear in their native Beauty and Lustre, when they shall be written in our Hearts, and fairly copied out in our Lives; and then, and not till then will the Efficacy and Virtue of the Gospel Precepts for the Reformation and Renovation of our Nature clearly demonstrate themselves; which great Truth is at present too much obscured and beclouded by the wicked Lives of Christians, the scandalous Behaviour of some, the Hypocrisy of others, and Luke-warmness and Imperfections of all. This causeth unspeakable Prejudice
against

the Recovery of fallen Man. 275

against Religion; gives Men low and unworthy Opinions of it; and tempts them to think that it hath no such Power to reform our Minds and Manners, as is here attributed to it. Thus the Faults of the Professors of Christianity are charged upon the Profession itself, which is surely very injurious Treatment of it. Let it but once have its full and perfect Work, and then it will vindicate itself from all the Misconceptions and Wrongs which it suffers in the Opinions of Men.

V. This Reasoning drawn from God's Regard for the due Observance of his Laws, in favour of their future universal Prevalence, is confirm'd by what I have to offer in the next Place, concerning the Aids and Assistances of his holy Spirit; which is an actual Proof, and the best that can be given, in behalf of his Concern for the Observance of them, since he vouchsafes them such extraordinary Helps for this Purpose. The obtaining of these internal Supplies of Grace and Assistance, is indeed the main End of those external Means above-mention'd: And for this Purpose chiefly do they seem to have been instituted. That the holy Spirit of God is present with all good Christians, by his restraining, converting, preventing, assisting, strengthening, and sanctifying, &c. Grace, is evident from several Passages of Scripture. Thus *Rom. viii. 26.* The Spirit is said to *help our Infirmities*, and we are elsewhere said to be *sanctified and purified by the Holy Ghost*. And so plentiful an Effusion is

276 Christianity calculated for

sometimes given of him, that God, by his Prophet *Joel* promises, *I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh*, ch. ii. 28. And this Prophecy was in an eminent Manner fulfill'd on the Day of *Pentecoste*, to which it is applied, *Acts* ii. 17. when we are told, v. 4. the Apostles were *all filled with the Holy Ghost*. And so intimately present is he with such as endeavour to fit themselves for his Reception, that he is said to *rest upon them*, 1 *Pet.* iv. 14. and *to dwell in them*. *Rom.* viii. 11. and accordingly they are call'd the *Temple of God*. 1 *Cor.* iii. 16. and their Bodies stiled the *Temple of the Holy Ghost*, ch. vi. 19. And so powerful a Principle of Spiritual Life and Action is he, that it is *by the Spirit of God that we are strengthen'd with Might in the inner Man*. *Eph.* iii. 16. And our *abounding in Hope*, and being *filled with all Joy and Peace in believing*, is ascribed to the Power of the Holy Ghost. *Rom.* xv. 13. Hitherto may be referr'd what our Saviour, for his Comfort, tells *St Paul*, 2 *Cor.* xii. 9. *My Grace is sufficient for thee, for my Strength is made perfect in Weakness*; as well as that triumphant Exultation of his, grounded undoubtedly on Experience, *I can do all Things through Christ that strengtheneth me*. *Phil.* iv. 13.

The pious Mr *Hales*, in his Sermon on this Text, entitled, *Christian Omnipotence*, has these remarkable Words, which tho' they run in so high a Strain, yet it cannot be said, but that they have sufficient Support from *St Paul's*

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the Recovery of fallen Man. 277.

Authority. 'From henceforth,' says he, 'let
'all Complaint concerning the Frailty and
'Weakness of Man's Nature for ever cease:
'For behold our Weakness is swallowed up
'of Strength, and Man is become Omnipotent—The Strength we lost in *Adam*, is
'with infinite Advantage supplied in Christ—
'who is ten-fold better unto us than all the
'Good of Paradise—the Loss of that Portion
'of Strength wherewith our Nature was originally endued, being made up with Fulness
'of Power in Christ—Again, let us conceive
'unto the utmost what our Strength might
'be in our first Estate, yet shall we never find it to be greater than what is here
'expressed—For greater Ability than Power
'to do all Things is not imaginable.'

To proceed,

Agreeably to the above Testimonies concerning the Assistance and Efficacy of divine Grace, GOD Almighty was pleased, in Fact, to give a most powerful *Demonstration of the Spirit*, and of his mighty working in the Minds of Men, at the first planting of Christianity, not only in those extraordinary and wonderful Gifts and Graces with which he inspired the holy Apostles, but also in his common Operations in the primitive Believers. For, 'What wonderful Alterations,' by Means of his powerful Aid and Influence, 'were
'made in the Lives and Manners of Men,
'transforming in an Instant the debauched and

278 *Christianity calculated for*

‘ dissolute into Patterns of the strictest Tempe-
 ‘ rance and Sobriety—turning Wolves into
 ‘ Lambs, and Vultures into Turtle-Doves?
 ‘ Which wondrous Effects were so very fre-
 ‘ quent that the Heathens themselves took
 ‘ special Notice of them; which, as *St Austin*
 ‘ tells us, made them to attribute the Success of
 ‘ the Gospel to the Power of Magic, think-
 ‘ ing it impossible it should do such Wonders,
 ‘ without the Assistance of some powerful
 ‘ Spirits.*

In the Lives of the primitive Christians we
 have a standing Monument of the Efficacy of
 this and other Gospel Means for the perfecting
 of Holiness. This lively Specimen is an un-
 deniable Proof of the Sufficiency of these
 Means for this Purpose, and at the same time
 may serve as a Spur and Incitement to all fu-
 ture Christians to imitate and equal, if not to
 out-do them. For why need we despair of this,
 since the same Assistance is offered us as was
 afforded them? For, as the same Author goes
 on, though ‘ now that Christianity hath gotten
 ‘ such Footing in the World, and is become
 ‘ the Religion of Nations, the divine Spirit
 ‘ does not ordinarily work upon Men in such
 ‘ a strange and miraculous Way; but pro-
 ‘ ceeds in more human Methods, by joyning
 ‘ in with our Understandings, that whatsoever
 ‘ Aids it affords us, they work in the same
 ‘ Way, and after the same Manner, as if all
 ‘ were perform’d by the Strength of our own
 ‘ Rea-

* *Scott's Christian Life.* Vol iv. p 246.

the Recovery of fallen Man. 279

‘ Reason. We have however a standing Promise which extends to all Ages of Christianity, that to him who improves the Grace which he hath already, more Grace shall be given—That if we work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling, GOD will work in us to will and to do—that he will give his holy Spirit to every one that asks and seeks it.’ Nay moreover, we have his own infallible Promise, *that he will abide with us for ever*: And in Assurance hereof it is observable, that the plentiful Effusion of the Spirit vouchsafed to the first Christians, is by the Apostle called the FIRST FRUITS, and EARNEST of the Spirit, *Rom. viii. 2, 3. 2 Cor. v. 5.* which plainly implies, that there is to be a still more plentiful Effusion, when the Prophecy of *Joel*, abovementioned, will have its full and final Accomplishment. *I will pour out my Spirit upon ALL Flesh*: I say more plentiful, in Proportion as the *Harvest* exceeds the *First-fruits*, and as the Remainder of that, whereof the *Earnest* is one Part, is by far the more considerable.

In the second Chapter of this Essay, I endeavour’d to state the Measures of Grace, and to trace out the Laws of the divine Conduct in the dispensing of it. And if the Positions there laid down are true, the divine Grace, tho’ the Gift of GOD, is in our own Power to obtain in what Measure we please: For as, according to the Reasoning in that Place, to which I refer the Reader, it depends altogether

280 *Christianity calculated for*

ther on our own Free-Will—by asserting and increasing our Freedom to Good (which the very Notion of Freedom implies to be in our Power) we proportionably increase our Portion of Grace: And as it is in our Power to increase the one in a manner as much as we please, so is it no less to increase the other; except that Freedom must still continue the more powerful and governing Principle; the other as an inferior Force tending towards the same End, co-operating with, and acting in Subservience to, and Assistance of it; and both together such as will be fully sufficient to enable us to recover our lost Uprightness.

But in Opposition hereto, it may be said, that as Grace is here made to depend entirely upon Free-Will—As it is no less in our Power to diminish our Freedom to Good, than to increase it, and to increase our Freedom to Evil, than to lessen it, and consequently to diminish Grace in Proportion—It may hence be argued, that we make Grace a very precarious Thing; and that there is as great a Probability, as well with regard to Individuals, as human Nature in general, of their lessening, as improving their Talent of Grace; nay greater, since the Balance is destroy'd, and the Bias inclined to Evil; and consequently that no Argument can be drawn from God's Offers of Grace and Assistance, for the Recovery of our original State; nor from any other Methods of his Providence, since they all may, and most probably will, be rejected,

For

the Recovery of fallen Man. 281

For an Answer to this Objection I refer the Reader to the Inference, p. 58. To what is there proved, I shall here only add, that as *the Hearts of the Sons of Men, are in the Hand of the Lord, and he turneth them whithersoever he will.* Prov. xxi. 1. so he may easily influence them to Good by the secret Impulses of his Spirit, as well as by several other Ways, without over-ruling, or in the least infringing their Liberty; even as we see, in civil Affairs, one Man, by superior Management and Address, to dispose whole Bodies of Men to promote his Views and Purposes, and to make his Designs the Subject of their own free Choice, even without perceiving the first Mover. And is it not much more in the Power of the Almighty, *who knoweth whereof we are made, and who hath fashioned all our Hearts,* by working upon the secret Springs of their Minds and Actions, *to turn the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the Just?* And may we not conclude, that what is thus in his Power, is no less in his Will, and that *He, the Lord, will hasten it in his Time,* and most assuredly bring it to pass? If these Principles are right, they may be of Service to put an End to those various Disputes relating to Grace and Free-Will, which have so long disturb'd the Peace of the Church, and which are still undetermined. And that they are right, may be presumed from their Agreement with Scripture, which exhorts us *to grow in Grace,* and *improve our Talents;* and promi-
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282 *Christianity calculated for*

seth that to him that bath, it shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly. Nor are they less agreeable to the Attributes of GOD, whose Goodness cannot be restrain'd from exerting itself towards us by any thing but its Opposite, *i. e.* Man's Wickedness, *i. e.* his increasing his Liberty to Evil, and diminishing his Liberty to Good.

I shall conclude this Head and Chapter in the Words of Dr Scott. 'From hence we
' may discern the Possibility of keeping the
' Commands of GOD, in that, GOD, by his
' Spirit, doth so powerfully aid and assist us.
' For supposing we cannot keep the divine
' Law by our own single Strength and Power,
' yet it is apparent, that we can do that which
' will *engage* the divine Spirit to assist and enable us to keep it; that is, we can do our
' Endeavour, which being done, entitles us to
' the Promise of divine Grace and Assistance
' And tho' we cannot do all ourselves, yet since
' we can do so much, as will certainly *engage*
' GOD to impower us to do the rest, it is already in our Power to do all, if we will.*

Thus I have endeavour'd to shew—From the general Design of Christianity—The Character and Example of our Redeemer—The Nature and Tendency of the Gospel-Precepts—The Concern of their Author for their Success—And the Means, Helps and Assistances

* Scott's Christian Life, *ib.* p. 258.

the Recovery of fallen Man. 283

ances he affords to render them successful—
That the Gospel-Dispensation is calculated
for the Recovery of our first Estate, and that
in Virtue thereof Mankind shall at length be
restored to it.

I shall now proceed to the Consideration of
some particular Passages of Scripture, which
concur in proving the same great Truth.

CHAP.

C H A P. XII.

*Containing particular Proofs from
Scripture, of Man's future Re-
covery of his primitive State.*

I SHALL begin with such Texts as relate to the *Enlargement* and *universal Extent* of CHRIST'S KINGDOM, and the Conversion of *Jews* and *Gentiles* to the Christian Faith. For as it is in Virtue of Christianity that Nature is to be perfected, if at all, the whole World must become Christian, before this Perfection can be fully accomplished.

The most remarkable Prophecies concerning the future Prevalence and Establishment of Christ's Kingdom, are those of *Daniel*, Chapters ii. and vii. In the first of these the *Messiah*, as is generally understood, or rather his Kingdom, is represented by a *Stone cut out without Hands, which smote the Image, representing the four great Monarchies, and brake it, and became a great Mountain, and filled the whole Earth*, v. 34, 35. which is thus explain'd, v. 44. *And in the Days of these Kings* (i. e. while some of these Kingdoms are yet in the Height of their Power, viz. the Roman) *shall the God of Heaven* (begin to) *set up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the Kingdom shall not be left*

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Proofs of Man's Recovery. 285

to other People (i. e. it shall not be supplanted and succeeded by any other Kingdom, as it happen'd to the former Kingdoms of this World) but it shall break in Pieces and consume all these Kingdoms (not at once, but by Degrees; not by open Force, but by a secret invisible Power: Nor will they be entirely demolished at its first Erection; on the contrary, the total Destruction of them will not be accomplished but in its final Establishment, at the End of many Ages) and it shall stand for ever, i. e. till the Consummation of all Things.

This Kingdom of Christ is no less clearly prophesied of ch. vii. 13 14. in these Words—*I saw in the Night-Visions, and behold one like the Son of Man came with the Clouds of Heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him Dominion, and Glory, and a Kingdom, that all People, Nations, and Languages should serve him: His Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, which shall not pass away, and his Kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed.* This Kingdom is to have its full Establishment in the Destruction of *Antichrist*, which the best Interpreters agree to be represented by *the little Horn*, v. 8. 10. &c. which had its Rise out of the fourth, viz. the Roman Monarchy: *And then the Kingdom and Dominion, and the Greatness of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven shall be given to the People of the Saints of the most High,*

286 *Scripture-Proofs of*

High, whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all Dominions shall serve and obey him. v. 17.

There are several other Prophecies no less exprefs concerning the Amplitude of Chrif's Kingdom. Of him it is that the Pfalmift fays, *He ſhall have Dominion from Sea to Sea, and from the River to the Ends of the Earth — All Kings ſhall fall down before him, and all Nations ſhall do him Service.* Pf. lxxii. 8, 11. fo again, *All the Ends of the Earth ſhall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the Kindreds of the Nations ſhall worſhip before him; for the Kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the Governor among the Nations.* Pf. xxii. 27, 28. and Pf. ii. 8. *Ask of me, and I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the uttermoſt Parts of the Earth for thy Poſſeſſion.* Perſuant to which Promiſe, and agreeably to all the foregoing Prophecies, St John, in the Viſion he ſaw relating to this great Event, ſpeaks of it in ſuch peremptory Terms, as if it had already happen'd. *The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever.* Rev. xii. 15.*

All this muſt ſignify ſomething more than mere Right and Title to the Kingdoms of the World, which were always the Kingdom of Chriſt in this Senſe; and in Conſequence of which, we muſt conclude, that the Time will
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* See Iſa. ix. 7. Luke i. 32, 33. Micah v. 4. Zech. xiv. 9.

the Recovery of fallen Man. 287

come, when he shall be invested with the Dominion and actual Possession of them, and shall receive their Homage and Obedience; which is what these Prophecies do so expressly foretell. But as nothing like this hath as yet happen'd, this sufficiently authorizes us to conclude, that these Prophecies have not had their Accomplishment in any past State of the Church, either *Jewish* or *Christian*, as *Grotius* and some others imagine: And to put the Matter out of all Doubt, our Saviour has, in the Form of Prayer which he hath taught us, inserted a Petition for the *Coming of this Kingdom*; whence it appears that it is yet to come, and to continue advancing till the End of the World; since probably the Use of this Prayer may continue in the Church, as long as there is a Church upon the Earth.

On the other hand, by comparing the Petition for the Coming of Christ's Kingdom, with the Prophecies relating to it, we are led into a more distinct Notion of what we ask therein, and enabled to *pray with the Understanding*; which, if it be not consider'd in this View, hath no great Share in it: And yet I doubt this is too generally the Case, notwithstanding it is among the first Rudiments of Christian Knowledge, and is of such frequent and necessary Use.

That which I apprehend to be the true Sense of this Petition, I find well expounded in an Extract out of a Latin Catechism publish'd in the Time of King *Edward VI.* and by

by his Authority, which is to be seen in Mr *Mede's Works*, and which is to this Effect*—

‘ In the second Place, we pray, that his *King-*
‘ *dom may come* : For as yet we do not see that
‘ all Things are subdued unto Christ—We do
‘ not see that the Stone cut out of the Mountain
‘ without Hands, hath broken in Pieces, and con-
‘ sumed the Statue described by *Daniel*—That
‘ that Rock alone, which is Christ, is in actual
‘ Possession of the Dominion of the whole
‘ World, which was conferr’d upon him by the
‘ Father. Antichrist is not as yet destroy’d : And
‘ therefore we pray, that this at length may be
‘ brought to pass, and that Christ alone may
‘ reign with his Saints, pursuant to the divine
‘ Promises ; and that he may live, and bear Rule
‘ over the World, according to the Institutions
‘ of his holy Gospel, and not according to the
‘ Traditions and Laws of Men, and the ar-
‘ bitrary Dictates of the Rulers of this
‘ World.’

For our further Assistance in forming right
 Conceptions of *Christ's Kingdom*, it will not
 be amiss to make some Enquiry into the Na-
 ture,

* *Secundo loco petimus, ut adveniat Regnum ejus : Adbuc
 enim non videmus Res omnes Christo esse subiectas ; Non vide-
 mus ut Lapis de monte abscissus sit sine Opere humano, qui contrivit,
 & in nihilum redegit Statuam descriptam a Daniele : Ut Petra
 sola, qui est Christus, occupet & obtineat totius Mundi Imperium
 a Patre concessum. Adbuc non est occisus Antichristus : quo fit,
 ut nos desideremus & precemur, ut id tandem aliquando contingat
 & impleatur ; utque solus Christus regnet cum suis Sanctis, se-
 cundum divinas Promissiones ; utque vivat & dominetur in Mun-
 do, juxta sancti Evangelii Decreta, non autem juxta Traditiones
 & Leges Hominum, & Voluntatem Tyrannorum Mundi.*

See Mr *Mede's Works*, publish'd by Dr *Worthington*, p, 814.

the Recovery of fallen Man. 289

ture of it, together with the Manner of its Growth and Progress.

The antient Jews, of whom were our Saviour's first Disciples, had very gross Notions of the *Messiah's* Kingdom, as appears particularly from *Matt. xx. 21. Luke xvii. 20. Acts i. 6.* for they imagined it consisted altogether in earthly Glory and Grandeur: Nor have their Descendants to this Day learned to correct their Opinions, or to form much better Judgments concerning it; for they dream of no less than being invested with universal Monarchy, when the Reign of their *Messiah* shall commence. On the other Hand, some modern Christian Divines seem to be as far gone towards the other Extreme, who would strip *Christ's* Kingdom of all temporal Authority and Power, and make it to be of so abstracted and spiritual a Nature, as if it were to be no more *in*, than it is *of* this World.

That this Kingdom will not be altogether spiritual, but that it will be likewise invested with temporal Power and Polity, and all other outward Essentials of a Kingdom, cannot be doubted; if it be consider'd, that when it comes to be fully established, there will be no other Form of Government: There will be then no such Thing as *Imperium in Imperio*—No two distinct Powers independent of, and clashing with each other, but the civil and ecclesiastical will be duly temper'd together and run into each Other; or rather both will be lost in the Divine, which shall then

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be established. However absurd or ridiculous this Conclusion may seem to some, it is what the fore-cited Prophecies of *Daniel* authorize us to make, as they are express that the *Messiah's* Kingdom shall be erected upon the Ruins of the other Kingdoms of the Earth, and succeed in their stead: And hence, I say, it follows, that it must have a Form of outward Polity, and be supported likewise with some outward Sanctions, such as are at least equipollent with those of the Kingdoms it shall have destroyed: For this much is included in the very Essence and Idea of all Government, and without which no Government can be conceived capable of being administer'd, or even of subsisting. Besides, it is hardly credible, that our Saviour would make such frequent Mention of the *Kingdom of God* in his Gospel, which he likewise sometimes calls *his Kingdom*, if it were not to be a *Kingdom indeed*: For why else does he chuse this Idea of a Kingdom to represent his Church on Earth by?

If the Controversy about Church-Government, which some Years ago, was, with more *Heat* than *Light*, carried on among us, had been confined to this its first and most proper View, I humbly conceive, with Submission to the great Writers concern'd in it, that the Dispute might have been sooner adjusted, and a more satisfactory Decision given of it.

On the other Hand, as this Kingdom is not to be established by human Means, and

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the Recovery of fallen Man. 291

as our Saviour himself not only doth not require, but even expressly disclaims the Assistance of the secular Arm. *Jo. xviii. 36.* here is no Ground of Umbrage given to earthly Powers on the one Hand, which otherwise are all subject to the over-ruling Power of GOD's Providence, *who removeth Kings and setteth up Kings.* *Dan. ii. 21.* Nor on the other Hand, is here any Encouragement for Subjects to rebell against their earthly Sovereigns, under Pretence of setting up King *Jesus*, as was the Case of some mad Enthusiasts, who appear'd in this Nation about the middle of the last Century. The fifth Monarchy will be erected in a more peaceable silent Manner. Thus our Saviour corrects the gross Notions of the *Pharisees* concerning his Kingdom, when he tells them, that *the Kingdom of GOD cometh not with Observation.* Its Progress will be so secret and invisible, that *Men shall not say, lo here, or lo there; for, as he adds, behold the Kingdom of GOD is within you.* *Luke xvii. 20, 21.* or rather, *is among you,* which is the more proper rendering of the Phrase, *ἐν τοῖς ὑμῶν ἐστίν.* The *Messiah* is among you, and his Reign is already commenced.*

Or, according to the former Sense, it is to be begun by subduing Mens unruly Lusts and Passions, bringing their Wills into Subjection, and their Hearts and Lives to the Obedience of Christ's Laws. And hence likewise the secret and spreading Influence of it is compa-

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* See Archbishop Tillotson's Sermon xl.

red in the Parable *to a little Leaven hid in a large Quantity of Meal*, and by Degrees *leavening the whole Mass*. Luke xiii. 21.

To give us a farther Insight into the Nature of this Kingdom, he who is Lord of it hath told us, *that it is not of this World, nor from hence*, as in the same Place he farther explains it. Jo. xviii. 36. that is, that it is not of earthly and human, but divine and heavenly Original—That it is not of the same transitory tottering Nature with mere earthly Kingdoms; nor built upon such wretched Maxims of Policy, as they are; nor like them liable to be disturb'd and overthrown by Disorders, Tumults, and Convulsions: But that its Constitution is of a more firm and permanent Nature, as well as more peaceable, flourishing and happy in every Respect; as it is founded, and will actually be established on the most unerring Principles of divine Government.

But we cannot, from such short Hints, as are given us in Scripture concerning it, pretend to trace out a just Description of it; especially while it is as yet but in its Infancy, as it were, being not grown to such a State of Maturity, as thoroughly to unfold it self: Notwithstanding, if I may be allowed a Conjecture, I imagine, that when it shall come to have its thorough Establishment, it is to be an UNIVERSAL THEOCRACY; such as the Jewish State, in some respects, under its Kings, *David* and *Solomon*, and in other, under its *Judges*, bore a distant Resemblance of, as I
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the Recovery of fallen Man. 293

am persuaded this was a *Type* of it. For thus we are told Isa. i. 26. *I will restore thy JUDGES as at the FIRST, and thy COUNSELLORS, as at the BEGINNING ; afterward thou shalt be called, the City of Righteousness, the faithful City. Zion shall be redeemed with Judgment, and her Converts with Righteousness. Judges as at the first—i. e.* Such as *Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Eleazer, &c.* Then all apparent Inequalities in the Ways of Providence shall disappear: *Every Valley shall be exalted, and every Mountain and Hill shall be made low : And the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough Places plain.* Isa. xl. 4. Which I apprehend to be one Sense of this Prophecy, in which it shall be fulfilled, by rectifying all the Disorders, unjustly charged upon GOD's Providence in the Government of the World, but really proceeding from the Wickedness and Sinfulness of Mankind, the genuine Cause of all Irregularity and Confusion ; as GOD himself complains, *Hear now, O House of Israel, Is not my Way equal ? Are not your Ways unequal ?* Ezek. xvii. 25. Which Words plainly imply, that the seeming Inequalities in GOD's Ways, are owing to the real Ones in the Ways of Men.

I shall now proceed to some Prophecies which predict the Conversion of all Nations to the Christian Faith, under other Characters no less plain than the former. Such is that in Isa. ii. 2, 3. *It shall come to pass in the*

last Days, that the Mountain of the Lord shall be established on the Top of the Mountains, and exalted above the Hills, and all Nations shall flow into it. Which Prophecy harmonizes with that of Daniel already cited, The Stone became a great Mountain, and filled the whole Earth: Where we see an Agreement in the Use of the same Image, a Mountain, and in the same Application of it.

To proceed,

The Gentiles shall come to thy Light, and Kings to the Brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine Eyes round about and see; all they gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy Sons shall come from far, and thy Daughters shall be nursed by thy Side—the Abundance of the Sea shall be converted unto thee, the Forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. Isa. lx. 3, 4, 5. As it is generally agreed, that these and the like Prophecies are to be understood of the Conversion of the Gentile World to the Christian Faith, so it is plain to any one who considers the Force of the Words, and the Universality of the Terms, that they cannot have their full and final Completion, till the Fulness of the Gentiles be come in; which the Apostle St Paul likewise speaks of as a Thing to be. He at the same Time acquaints us that there shall be likewise a national Conversion of the Jews, who shall once more become a famous and flourishing Church. I would not that you should be ignorant of this Mystery, that Blindness in Part is happened

the Recovery of fallen Man. 295

ed unto Israel, untill the Fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, there shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away Ungodliness from Jacob, for this is my Covenant unto them, when I shall take away their Sins. Rom. xi. 25,—27. from Isa. lix. 20. The Apostle's Application of this Prophecy justifies our interpreting others in the same manner. In that Day, the Lord shall set his Hand again the SECOND TIME to recover the Remnant of his People—and shall assemble the Out-casts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four Corners of the Earth. Isa. xi. 11, 12. Where Mention is made of the *second Time* undoubtedly in Contradistinction to the Deliverance from the *Babylonish Captivity*; that being the *first* and only Time hitherto, that there hath been any national Return of the Jews out of *Assyria*, and the other Countries mentioned in this Prophecy, so that the *second Time* is yet to come: When not only the two Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, but all the other Tribes of *Israel* shall return to their own Land, as is evident from this and many other Prophecies; which the Reader may think too tedious to be cited particularly, and therefore I shall only refer to some of the most remarkable of them,*

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* See Deut. xxx. 3, 4, 5. Isa. xliii. 5, 6. xlix. 22. &c. lxvi. 20. Jer. xxiii. 7, 8. xxxi. 8, 12. xxxii. 37. &c. Ezek. xi. 17. &c. xx. 41. xxviii. 25. xxxiv. 12, &c. xxxvi. 24, xxxvii.

which generally relate as well to their Conversion as Return.

The whole Nation being thus restored to, and repossessed of their native Country, shall no more be dispossessed of it. *I will bring again the Captivity of my People Israel—and I will plant them upon their own Land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their Land which I have given them, saith the Lord.* Amos ix. 14, 15. *And they shall Worship the Lord in the holy Mount of Jerusalem.* Isa. xxvii. 13.

For which purpose their City and Temple shall be rebuilt: For so hath God promised, *to glorify the House of his Glory, beautify the Place of his Sanctuary, and make the Place of his Feet glorious.* Ch. ix. 7, 13. But in what Manner shall it be rebuilt? And for what Purposes? For the Revival of the Jewish Worship? The Re-establishment of the Type, when the Antitype had taken Place? This is a Notion too absurd, one would think, for any Christian Divine to entertain.

Their Temple indeed shall be rebuilt, but after the *Christian Model*, and the Christian Worship shall be established in it, as is sufficiently intimated to them by their own Prophets. Thus *Jeremy* assures them, that in those Days the *Ark of the Covenant*, the Symbol of the divine Presence under the Law, shall

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xxvii. 12, 21. xxxix. 27 *Hosea* iii. 4, 5. *Zechariah* viii. 7, 8. x. 10. xii. 6. &c. Note, *Zechariah* prophesied after the *Babylonish Captivity*, so that none of his Prophecies can relate to it.

the Recovery of fallen Man. 297

no more come to Mind, nor be visited, or desired any more by them. Jer. iii. 16. The Circumcision, which upon their Restoration will take place and be required of them, is the Circumcision of the Heart, as their own Law-giver Moses informs them. Deut. xxx. 6. Which is the Christian Circumcision, And the Covenant which will then be established with them, shall be the Christian Covenant. For, Behold the Days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a NEW Covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah: Not according to the Covenant which I made with their Fathers, in the Day that I took them by the Hand to bring them out of the Land of Egypt—But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the House of Israel, after those Days, saith the Lord: I will put my Law in their inward Parts and write it in their Hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my People. Jer. xxxi. 31, 32, 33. And St Paul interprets this of the Christian Covenant. Heb. viii. 8.

The xlth and following Chapters of *Ezekiel* contain a prophetical Description of this Temple and City, as they are to be built, and of the Division of the Land among the twelve Tribes, and their Settlement in it. And that this State is still future is manifest, as the twelve Tribes have never returned, to make any such Division or Settlement. *The dry Bones of the House of Israel, mentioned Chap. xxxvii. have not as yet been breathed upon*

upon, nor restored to Life. The two Tribes and the ten, represented by the two Sticks of *Judah* and *Ephraim*, v. 15. &c. have never been re-united. No such signal Destruction of their Enemies hath happen'd as is foretold, Chap. xxxviii. xxxix. Neither hath any such City been built, or Temple raised; as may be concluded from the Unsuccessfulness of the Attempts of *Vallapandus*, and other learned Men, to suit this Description to either of the former Temples. For as the Event clears all Prophecies, so the Obscurity which this Prophecy still labours under, is an uncontestable Proof that it hath not been as yet fulfill'd.

It is indeed supposed by many, I believe, I may say, by most, excepting the Jews themselves, that the ten Tribes were so dispersed among the Heathen, that all Distinction between them and the Nations they mixt with hath been long ago destroyed: But even this ought not to be made an Argument against the Possibility, or even Probability of their Restoration.

For not to enquire, whether they are continued a distinct People or not, which I take to be an Enquiry rather curious than necessary for this Purpose, is it not as easy for God Almighty to gather them out of all Lands, whither he hath scattered them, from the East, from the West, from the North, and from the South; as it is to collect the scatter'd Particles of every individual Body of all the Tribes of the Earth, at the Resurrection, to
make

the Recovery of fallen Man. 299

make the Bones come together, Bone to Bone, and the Sinews and Flesh to come upon them, and to make these our dry Bones live? This, however wonderful in itself, as it is at present the firm Belief of Christians, ought to remove all Scruples with regard to the other. And this Emblem is probably made Use of to convince us, both of the Greatness of the Thing, and the Feasibleness of it to God, by comparing it with what is so miraculous, and the Belief of which is at the same Time become so familiar to us.

Some learned Men * indeed understand these Prophecies concerning *Judah* and *Israel*, of the spiritual *Israel*, the Church of *Christ* in general, and seem to doubt of a national Conversion and Return of the native *Israelites*. But I do not see what Right or Authority they have to exclude those who are the immediate Subjects of these Prophecies, from any Share in them; when they may very consistently be understood of the universal Christian Church in the spiritual Sense, and of the Jews in the literal; wherein I see nothing absurd or incredible, as it is above explain'd.

On the contrary, the Belief of it seems to be not a little facilitated by their continuing, I mean the two Tribes, for so many Ages a distinct tho' a dispersed People, and by the Continuance of their Country in its present desolate and uninhabited State, whereby it seems to be reserved, after the Performance of its Sab-

* See Dr *Lightfoot's* Works. Vol. i. p. 375, 737.

Sabbaths, for the Return of its antient Inhabitants, to inhabit and cultivate it; when it will be restored to its former Fertility, as might be shewn from numerous Prophecies concerning it, if it would not carry me too far out of my Way.

To the foregoing Prophecies it may not be amiss to add that of *Tobit*, Chap. xiv. Which tho' it be Apocryphal, may serve as a good Comment upon them; especially according to the Hebrew Copy published by *Lagius*, which Mr *Mede* prefers as the most genuine—which indeed is preferable in itself; as upon other Accounts, so especially for its Clearness, Consistency, and distinct Mention of both Captivities and Returns; and which therefore I shall here follow.—

*But the Rest of our Brethren of Israel, who are in Jerusalem shall all go into Captivity, and Jerusalem, shall become as Heaps, and the Mountain of the House as the High Places of the Forest *; and shall continue desolate for a Time.*

Then shall the Children of Israel ascend and rebuild it together with the Temple; but not according to the former Building, and they shall abide there many Days until a certain Period of Time be fulfilled.

Then they shall again go into a Captivity the greatest and most grievous of any: But He the holy and blessed One shall remember them

* Compare herewith *Micah* iii. 12. *Jer.* xxvi. 18.

the Recovery of fallen Man. 301
them, and gather them together from the four
Corners of the Earth.

Then shall Jerusalem, the holy City, be rebuilt in a beautiful and glorious Manner, and the Temple likewise shall be built with a glorious Building, which shall not be destroyed for ever, as the Prophets have spoken.

Which last Words shew whence Tobit derived his Knowledge of these Events, viz. from such of the Prophecies (above taken Notice of) as were extant in his Times; and what his Sense of those Prophecies was.

When the Jews shall be thus converted and embrace the Gospel, then shall Salvation be again derived from them to the Gentiles, and they shall be the Means of converting such of them as remain to be converted. For, saith the Apostle, *if the Fall of them be the Riches of the World, and the diminishing of them the Riches of the Gentiles, how much more their Fulness.*

And if the Casting away of them be the Reconciling of the World, what shall the Receiving of them be, but Life from the Dead, to the same World? Rom. xi. 12, 15.* And thus it appears, that by the Accession of both Jew and Gentile, the whole World shall become Christian, and that *all the Kingdoms of the Earth shall become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.*

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* *Whitby's Treatise of the true Millennium. p. 725. See also Dr Scott's Account of the Enlargement of Christ's Kingdom. Christian Life. Vol. iii. p. 486.*

The Question is, Whether the Christians of that Age will be better than those of all the foregoing? For, notwithstanding the Universality of it, if Christianity be not practised, as well as professed, it will avail us but little towards rectifying the Disorders of our Nature.

For the satisfying of our Doubts in this Respect, it need only be considered, that these Prophecies which are conceived in such strong Terms, can never be fully accomplished by the Conversion even of the whole Race of Mankind to the bare outward Profession of Christianity; since this, after all, would be but a partial Conversion, which is of little Value in the Sight of God, who disowns and rejects the mere nominal Christian.

But Scripture it self prevents our Reasoning on this Head. For, with regard to the State of Religion in general, God, among other Blessings which he hath promised to his Church, tells her, *That her People shall be ALL Righteous.* Isa. lx. 21. And Ch. lii. 1. He addresseth himself unto her in this manner, *Awake, awake, put on thy Strength, O Zion, put on thy beautiful Garments, O Jerusalem, the holy City; for henceforth there shall no more come unto thee the Uncircumcised and the Unclean.** Parallel to which Place is, Rev. xxi. 27. (which I shall hereafter shew to relate to the future State of the Church in this Life,) *And there shall in no wise enter in-*
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* See also Ch. liv. 14. lxi. 10, 11.

the Recovery of fallen Man. 303

to it (the holy City, the new Jerusalem) any Thing that defileth, neither that worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lye, but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. To this Purpose is that of Jer. l. 20. *In those Days, and in that Time, saith the Lord, the Iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the Sins of Judah, and they shall not be found, for I will pardon—or (according to the Vulgate) I will be propitiations to—them whom I reserve.* And likewise that of Zech. xx. 21. *In that Day there shall be upon the Bells of the Horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD, and every Pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD—and in that Day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the House of the Lord of Hosts:* Intimating, that the Time will come, when GOD shall assert his Dominion over the World in so absolute a Manner, that Men shall entirely devote themselves and theirs to his Worship and Service; and that the Church of Christ will be brought to that desirable State of Purity, that all Christians will serve GOD in Sincerity of Heart, neither shall it have any corrupt or hypocritical Members to profane it; as *Calvin* upon the Place observes.

‘ Thus the Kingdom of Christ in this
‘ World being arrived to its full Extent and
‘ Growth; Truth and Peace, Charity and Justice, shall reign and flourish over all the
‘ Earth: Now all the World shall be Christendom, and Christendom shall be restored
‘ to

‘to its antient Purity ; for now he who is to
 ‘come with his Fan in his Hand, will tho-
 ‘roughly purge the Floor of his Church from
 ‘all Chaff of Superstition and Idolatry, Schism
 ‘and Heresy, Irreligion and Immorality, with
 ‘which it is almost totally covered ; and the
 ‘true Faith, the sincere Piety, the generous
 ‘and unaffected Virtue, which Christianity
 ‘teaches and prescribes, shall be the universal
 ‘Livery and Cognizance of the Christian
 ‘World.’ *

But that Perfection of Holiness which the whole Body of Christians is to arrive at, is no where spoken of in such strong and plain Terms as by St Paul. *Eph. iv. 12, 13, 15, 16.* Where he tells us, that the End for which the several Officers of the Church were ordained, is—*For the PERFECTING of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the EDIFYING of the Body of Christ : Till we ALL come in the UNITY of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of GOD, unto a PERFECT Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the FULNESS of Christ--That we may GROW UP unto him in ALL Things, which is the Head, even Christ. From whom the whole Body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every Joint supplieth, according to the effectual Working in the Measure of every Part, maketh Increase of the Body unto the EDIFYING of it self in Love.*

The Force of these Words is generally
 much

* *Scott's Christian Life, ib. p. 489.*

much enervated by the Commentators for want of attending to the just Import and Meaning of them, which if they had done, they would not so slightly have pass'd over such an inestimable Treasure of divine Knowledge as is convey'd to us in them. The Passage in its full Sense seems to afford Ground for the following Conclusions.

1. That the Design of the Christian Ministry being *the perfecting of the Saints*, and *edifying of the Body of Christ*; this Ministry is not to cease till this End be fully attained, viz. *till we all come unto a perfect Man, unto the full Measure of the Stature of Christ.*

2. From hence it appears to what Heights of Perfection human Nature shall be raised under the Christian Dispensation. For as Christ is the great Standard of its Perfection, agreeably to the Maxim, *Perfectissimum in suo Genere est Mensura reliquorum*: Or as it is otherwise expressed to much the same Effect, *Specimen Naturæ capi debet ex optimâ quâque Naturâ**: So is it evident from hence, that the human Nature in general which is here considered in the Aggregate, as one Man, shall come up to this Standard, as near as mere Man is capable of approaching.

For Distinction ought to be made between the Perfection of a Nature merely human, and of such as is both divine and human; tho' the Words under Consideration seem not to imply the least Distinction or Reserve, but rather

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* Cic. Tusc. Quæst. Lib. 1.

the contrary—*Till we all come unto a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ*: Which Expression, as it seems to be too strong, might be rendered in a more qualified Sense, *In Proportion to the Stature of the Fulness of Christ*—Or else, leaving the Hebrew Idiom, *In Proportion to the full Stature of Christ*. For why may not the Word Μέτρον be render'd by *Proportion* here, as well as it is thought to require that Interpretation by Dr *Hammond*, and after him *Whitby*, a little lower down, viz. in the 16th Verse of this Chapter?

3. From hence it appears by what Means, and in what Manner the Saints are to be thus perfected, and the Body of Christ to be thus completely edified, or built up; viz. by Means of the continued Labours of a standing Ministry, v. 15, 16. whereby the whole Body of Christians being brought to an Agreement in the Faith and Knowledge of Christ, and being thus united unto him its Head, and compacted and cemented in itself, each Member in its Place and Office, and in Proportion to its Power and Ability, contributing to this End—This Body, I say, being thus happily disposed, *groweth up unto Christ in all Things, and maketh Increase of itself, to the edifying of itself in Love*. Whence it appears,

4. That Christianity, and in Virtue of it, the human Nature is in a growing, progressive State, and is to advance to its Perfection by a gradual

the Recovery of fallen Man. 307

gradual Increase; and that the Spiritual Body of Christ, like his own, or any other natural Body, is to arrive at its Maturity no otherwise, than by a leisurely Growth in Wisdom and all other Christian Graces*. Hence the Kingdom of God is compared to a *Grain of Mustard-Seed* becoming a great Tree; and to a *little Leaven* leavening the whole Mass. And in this Sense I understand 2 Cor. iii. 18. *We all are changed into the Image of Christ, from Glory to Glory, i. e. from one Degree of Glory to another.*

5. Here is a Promise of what the Church at present hath great Cause to mourn the Want of, but which will be an eminent and essential Character belonging to that perfect State of it, which is here supposed, *viz. Christian Unity. Till we all come in the Unity of the Faith* (or rather) *unto an Unity of Faith, &c.* That this happy End will at length be attained, is intimated in several other Places of holy Writ. Thus Jer. xxxii. 39. *I will give them one Heart†, and one Way* (i. e. of Worship) *that they may fear me for ever.* And Zeph. iii. 9. *Then will I turn to the People a pure Language, that they may all call upon the Name of the Lord, to serve him with one Consent.* A pure Language? What can that mean? Shall all Mankind be brought to speak one and the same Language, agreeably to the Tradition above-mentioned, p. 211.? That indeed has been talked of as what would be vastly

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* Compare Col. ii. 19.

† Compare Ezek. xi. 19.

convenient, and something towards it hath been projected*. And some of the *Jewish* Interpreters imagine, that the Confusion of Tongues supposed to have been introduced at *Babel*, shall be removed, and that the *Hebrew* shall again become the universal Language; but with regard to this, I believe nothing either one Way, or other. The Word (שֵׁפָה *SaPHaH*) in the Text translated *Language*, is in the Margin rendered, *Lip*, that being the strict Signification of the Word; which learned Men begin to think, ought in some other Places,† to be interpreted by, *Confession of Faith*, or *Religion*; and the Context in this Place seems to determine it to the same Sense—I will turn unto the People, or, turn the People unto the pure Religion—(That they may all call upon the Name of the Lord) or rather, as I have observed p. 68. concerning this Phrase, לְקַרְא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה (*LiKRoA BeSHeM JeHoVaH*) that they may invoke in the Name of the Lord, *Jehovah*; which particularly specifies the pure Religion before-mentioned; there not being a juster Description of Christianity than that it is the worshiping of GOD thro' the Mediator, the *Jehovah* of the O. T. (To serve him with one Consent) or as it is in the Margin, *with one Shoulder*, which denotes not only their Unanimity, but Zeal—They shall serve him with the united Application of all their Might. Thus the Apo-

* Bp. *Wilkins's* Essay towards a philosophical Language.

† See New Account of the Confusion of Tongues: And Miscellaneous Reflections on Mr *Squire's* Essays, p. 9.

the Recovery of fallen Man. 309

Apostle tells us, *God hath purposed in himself in the Dispensation of the Fulness of Time to gather together in one, ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι, all Things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth.* Eph. i. 10. Then *one King shall be King unto us all.* Ezek. xxxvii. 22. And *there shall be one Fold and one Shepherd.* Jo. x. 16.

To proceed now to the Consideration of other Particulars—One Thing which renders the future Existence of such a State as I am pleading for highly credible, is, that there are some Precepts in the Gospel, which in their just and strictest Sense, are by no Means suitable to the present State of the World, but seem calculated for one much higher and more advanced. Of this Kind, I conceive those Precepts to be, which absolutely forbid, *Going to Law, Repelling Injuries, Swearing, Resistance of the higher Powers*, and some others that might be mentioned; a strict Observance of which, as it is hardly reconcileable with civil Prudence in our present disorderly corrupt State, so a more qualified Sense, and such as is more consistent with it, is put upon them by the more humanly wise Part of Christians; which yet the Necessity arising from the Danger and Inconveniencies apprehended from a rigid Adherence to them is the only Ground of. But it is easy to conceive a State of such Perfection, in which even worldly Wisdom would dictate to *take Wrong, and suffer ourselves to be defrauded*, according to the Apo-

stle's Advice, 1 Cor. vi. 7. rather than have Recourse to Law or Force, to right or defend ourselves : Which Methods are much less necessary than they are apprehended to be, as the World stands at present. But if a bearing and forgiving Temper be attended with Advantages sufficient to recommend it, as bad as the World now is, how unexceptionably advantageous would it be in a World wherein no Danger would ensue from it? Then would our Saviour's Beatitude appear to be founded in Nature, and its Truth verified, *viz. That blessed are the Meek, for they shall inherit the Earth.*

The Use of Oaths is confessed by the wisest Men of all Ages and Denominations, to have arisen from Perfidy and Corruption, and to be continued only as a Medicine in Case of Necessity, and in Condescension to, and Supply of Defect. Therefore in a State of Perfection, Oaths must cease of themselves, and fall into Disuse, when Men's Integrity will be such, that their bare Affirmations will be of more Weight than their most solemn Appeals to Heaven are at present. And such will be the mutual Confidence and Harmony between Sovereigns and their Subjects, that all Occasions for Disputes about Passive Obedience, and the Lawfulness of Resistance will be taken away.

The future Prevalence of universal Holiness may be farther inferr'd from the peculiar Presence of God, and that plentiful Effusion of
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the Recovery of fallen Man. 311

the Holy Ghost, which is promised to the Church. For, concerning the former, we are told, *That He will set his Sanctuary in the midst of his People for evermore; his Tabernacle shall be also with them, and he will dwell with them, and he will be their GOD, and they shall be his People.* Ezek. xxxvii. 27. Rev. xxi. 3. And with regard to the latter—I will pour Water upon him that is thirsty, and Floods upon the dry Ground. I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my Blessing upon thine Offspring. Isa. xlv. 3. So Ezek. xxxvi. 27. I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my Statutes. And it shall come to pass in those Days, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesy, your old Men shall dream Dreams, and your young Men shall see Visions; and also upon your Servants and Handmaids, in those Days will I pour out my Spirit. Joel ii. 28. These Prophecies, 'tis true, have had one remarkable Completion by the Descent of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecoste; but that they had not then their full and final Accomplishment is evident from Acts ii. 39. where St Peter tells the first Converts, that *the Promise of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, was not only unto them, and to their Children, but to all that were afar off, even as many as the Lord our GOD shall call.* And therefore these Prophecies, as they imply something more than the ordinary Assistances of the Spirit, are understood to point

more especially to the future Ages of the Gospel, when the *Jews*, to whom they are particularly address'd, shall be converted to the Christian Faith. And some there are that do not seem capable of any other Meaning. Thus, *I will pour upon the House of David, and upon the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of Grace and Supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have PIERCED, &c.* Zech. xii. 10. And Isa. xxxii. 15. contains a Promise to the *Jews*, that *the Spirit shall be poured upon them from on high*, and likewise assigns the Time of its Completion, *viz.* when their Land shall be restored to its Fertility; that is, not before their Return to cultivate it. The Circumstances of both these Prophecies limit them to the People of the *Jews*—These People are hitherto far enough from enjoying the Blessing promised in them, as they seem to be rather under a kind of Dereliction of the Spirit, than to be influenced by him—Therefore this Influence is yet to come, and seems reserved for their Conversion.

Having shewn above p. 279. the Possibility of attaining to Perfection in Holiness by the Assistance of God's holy Spirit, and that it is in our Power to have that Assistance in what Measure we please, by conforming to the Laws of the divine Conduct in dispensing of it, so I have here shewn that Mankind actually shall have his Assistance in a very plentiful manner, if the divine Promise is to be credited: Which confirms this Hypothesis in general, as well

the Recovery of fallen Man. 313

well as the particular Reasoning on this Subject, p. 57. For as the divine Assistance is not to be expected otherwise than in God's stated Methods of vouchsafing it, and as we cannot imagine he will vouchsafe it at all in such eminent Degrees, but to proper and worthy Objects of it; so it is most rational to suppose, as we have hence good Grounds for the Supposition; that Mankind will gradually increase their Liberty to Good, and proportionably improve their Talent of Grace likewise, till it comes to that remarkable Pitch here prophesied of.

When God shall communicate his holy Spirit in this plentiful manner, we may well suppose that Men's Understandings will be greatly illuminated, as well as that their Wills and Affections will be purified by the powerful Influence of his Grace. Accordingly we learn, that in those Days, *they shall teach no more every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, saying, know the Lord: For they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord.* Jer. xxxi. 34. *Many shall run to and fro, and Knowledge shall be increased.* Dan. xii. 4. *All thy Children shall be taught of the Lord,* saith Isaiah, Ch. liv. 13. Jo. vi. 45. *And the Earth shall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea.* Isa. xi. 9. And it should seem from the Increase of Knowledge of all Kinds, both divine and human, which hath been made in these latter Ages, that
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these Prophecies are beginning to work towards a Completion.

Now laying together what hath been said—There being so many remarkable Passages of Scripture, which speak in such high Terms of the Amplitude of Christ's Kingdom; the Righteousness and Holiness, Perfection and Unity of its Subjects; and of the divine Presence and Assistance to encourage and influence them, to all Things good and praise-worthy, to purify their Affections and enlighten their Understandings—It cannot be affirmed that there hath been such a State of Things, as is here described, in any past Age of the Church; that Christ's Kingdom hath been so universally extended; or that there hath been such a lively and vigorous State of Religion, in respect either of Permanency or Degree; which yet it ought to be, to make it answerable to the Import of the Prophecies; The Conclusion therefore is unavoidable, *viz.* that this blessed State is to come.

And how highly must we conceive of human Nature when it is arrived at this Pitch? When all the World shall become Christians, and good Christians too; supported and inspired by Heaven; knit and bound together in one common Band of Love; animating and outvying each other, and even themselves in all good Works; aiming at still higher Degrees of Perfection; and daily proceeding *from Strength to Strength, being changed from Glory to Glory*, and the Lustre of their Lives resem-

the Recovery of fallen Man. 315

resembling the shining Light which shineth more and more unto the perfect Day. Prov. iv.

18. Surely this must be the paradisiacal State ! And there will then be a Heaven upon Earth !

But here it may be objected, "That whatever Countenance from Scripture is pretended in Favour of this Doctrine, which supposes that Mankind shall in this Life attain to sinless Perfection, it must be false, or contradictory to other Passages of Scripture, which seem to be express against it. Thus it is said, *There is none that doth Good, no not one.* Ps. xiv. 3. *That there is not a just Man upon Earth that doth Good and sinneth not.* Eccl. vii. 20. *That all have sinned and come short of the Glory of GOD.* Rom. iii. 23. And that *the Scripture hath concluded all under Sin, that every Mouth may be stopped, and all the World may become guilty before GOD.* Gal. iii. 22. Rom. iii. 19. with many more Texts to the same Purpose."

It may be farther objected, "That this is a *Pelagian*, or enthusiastic Doctrine—That it destroys the Covenant of Grace, setting up that of Works in its stead ; establishing a Righteousness of our own, exclusive of that by Faith in Christ ; and rendering his Atonement and Sufferings for Sin unnecessary ; as it likewise seems to do the Use of that Prayer which he hath taught us, one Petition of which is, *Forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that trespass against us.*"

To these several Objections which I have thrown

thrown together into one, I answer *first*, that those Scriptures which maintain Man's unavoidable Sinfulness are to be understood either of the natural Man, destitute of the Aids of divine Grace; whose inherent Corruption and Insufficiency for Good is not denied, but all along necessarily supposed by this Doctrine: Or else, *secondly*, they are to be understood of the State of the Church when those Scriptures were written, or to which they refer. Thus it is evident that the xiv Psalm was designed only by the Author as a Character of the *Jews* in the Age he wrote it: And that it was applied by St *Paul* to both the *Jews* and *Gentiles* of his Time; but it doth not appear that the Holy Ghost design'd to extend it any farther. But admitting, *thirdly*, that some Texts of Scripture, which mention Man's Sinfulness, are to be understood in their utmost Latitude, of human Nature in general, including every Individual of every Age; yet as I have shewn in the Beginning of this Treatise, p. 15. that Man in his State of Innocence might have been liable to some lesser Infirmities, which in Strictness of Account must partake of the Nature of Sin: So neither, when he regains this State, is there any Necessity for supposing him entirely exempt from Sin.

And therefore, 'as now, (to use the Words of St *Austin*) 'by reason of certain 'Ignorances and Infirmities of her Members, 'the whole Church hath Cause to say daily,
'For

the Recovery of fallen Man. 317

‘*Forgive us our Trespases**,’ so I will not maintain that the same Reason for the Use of this Petition may not in some Measure subsist as long as there is a Church upon Earth: Tho’ even at present, not only vain Pretenders to Perfection, think themselves too holy to use it, but this Prayer is in a great Measure laid aside by some of the more sober Disciples of Christ.

Notwithstanding the Concession here made, the Characters of Righteousness and true Holiness, above-mentioned, may still belong to the Church in an equitable and favourable Sense: Nor need it be feared, that Man will then assume any Self-sufficiency, either upon the Schemes of the *Catharists* or *Pelagians* of old; or of our modern *Deists* on the one hand, or enthusiastic *Perfectionists* on the other. For Mankind will then understand themselves and their Religion better than to repose any Confidence in their own good Works, as in themselves meritorious of Justification; because however good and perfect they shall be, they must know, that their Goodness cannot proceed from themselves, but from the Grace and Spirit of GOD, *who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good Pleasure*; and therefore all *Boasting* is utterly excluded†. Besides, as our Works can never be so perfect before GOD, as to stand the Severity of his Justice, should He be *extreme to mark what*
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* *Retract. Lib. 2, Cap. 18.*

† See Eph ii. 8. with *Whitby in locum.*

is done amiss, so we shall ever stand in Need of the Merits and Atonement of our Redeemer: And the nearer we approach to Perfection, the less we shall lean to our own Righteousness, and the more we shall repose our Faith and Trust in him, who alone is *able to keep us from falling, and to present us FAULTLESS before the Presence of his Glory.* Jude 24.

In a word, the Covenants of Grace and Works will then coincide, but no way interfere with each other. For it is very observable that the Law of Works is so far from being abolished by any formal Abrogation in the New Testament, that on the contrary, there are some plain Intimations in it of its being still in Force. *Matt. v. 17. Rom. viii. 4.* And when this happy Union of both Covenants shall be effected, then will those prophetic Words of the Psalmist be fully verified, *Mercy and Truth will meet together, Righteousness and Peace will kiss each other.* Ps. lxxxv. 10.

When the Church shall thus be arrived at its highest State of earthly Purity—As soon as it may truly be said to be WITHOUT SPOT OR WRINKLE, OR ANY SUCH THING, then Christ will present it to himself a *glorious Church.* Eph. v. 27. And when our Nature shall have attained its utmost Accomplishment, its most consummate Pitch of Perfection in this World; then these Things shall be all done away, and it shall be translated to a still more perfect State in the celestial Regions.

It may be here replied, that contrary to this
Sup-

the Recovery of fallen Man. 319

Supposition, there will be wicked Men in the World as long as *the World lasts*, which Scripture may be thought to warrant. Thus some may think as much to be implied in those Words of our Saviour—*Nevertheless when the Son of Man cometh shall he find Faith on the Earth?* Luke xviii. 8. The same likewise may be infer'd from the Parable of the *Tares*, which he would not suffer to be pluck'd up from among the *Wheat*, but order'd that both should be permitted to *grow together until the Harvest*, Matt. xiii. 30. whence it hath been thought, that there will be a Continuance of both Tares and Wheat, good Men and bad, till the End of the World.

Now with regard to the former Text—The *Coming* of Christ therein mention'd is understood by many to be meant, not of his *last Coming*, but of his *Coming* to avenge his chosen Servants, the Christians, on the persecuting *Jews* in the Destruction of their City and Nation. And accordingly Dr *Hammond* translates the Words, *shall he find Faith*, not, *on the Earth*, but ἐν τῇ γῆ in the Land, i. e. of *Judea*. For it is remarkable, that when *Titus* came to besiege *Jerusalem*, all the Christians had left it, by a divine Monition, and retired beyond *Jordan*, insomuch that there was not one remaining, but the unbelieving *Jews* only. Well therefore might our Saviour ask, *when the Son of Man cometh shall he find Faith in the Land?* This Text therefore hath nothing to do with the End of the World;

World. Which is also evident from the Occasion of it: For the Design of his Coming here mention'd, was *to avenge his Elect*; which agrees with his Coming to the Destruction of the *Jews*, but not with his last Coming at the End of the World. As to the Parable, I observe,

1. That the Design of it is only to caution the Governors of the Church against the Exercise of too rigorous a Discipline in ejecting Offenders out of it, lest the Innocent should be involved with, or mistaken for the Guilty; but in all dubious Cases to refer them to the last Judgment. This, I say, being the only Design of the Parable, there is no Necessity of extending it any farther.

2. There will be wicked Men and Hypocrites enough at the End of the World, after the general Resurrection to be separated from among the good Christians, without supposing a Mixture of each to continue throughout all Ages, till that Time. Accordingly, Dr. *Clark*, to avoid that Supposition, paraphrases upon the Words in this manner—'Let them alone till Harvest, and then I will order my Reapers to pick out the Tares first, and burn them, and then gather the Wheat into my Barn.'

3. I shall hereafter produce evident Proofs from Scripture, that the last Generation of Men shall be *all* righteous, and that there will not be a wicked Person among them.

But still it may be objected, that admitting
Man

the Recovery of fallen Man. 321

Man may recover the Purity and Perfection of his primitive Condition, yet he cannot be said to be fully re-instated in it, unless he likewise be possessed of its Happiness—be exempted from all the other Evils of his lapsed Condition, as well as from Sin, and be invested with the Privilege of uninterrupted Felicity of all Kinds, and in the End with Immortality itself.

All this I readily grant, and therefore, if the several Things here insisted upon can be fully made out, I hope nothing farther will be expected.

In order to which, I shall begin with examining what the future State of the Church will be, chiefly with regard to outward Circumstances. And here we shall find that the Scriptures speak much of the flourishing and peaceable State of it; but generally in Conjunction with its Purity and Holiness. Thus the Psalmist gives us a very splendid and pompous Description of the Spouse of Christ, and among other lively and magnificent Emblems by which he represents her, he tells us, that *the King's Daughter is all glorious within, and that her Cloathing likewise is of wrought Gold. She shall be brought unto the King in Raiment of Needle-work, with Joy and Gladness shall she be brought, and shall enter into the King's Palace.* Ps. xlv. 14, 15, 16. Isaiah likewise introduces her exulting in her beauteous and goodly Apparel, and at the same Time gives us to understand wherein the

322 *Scripture-Proofs of*

Nature of it doth consist. *I will greatly rejoyce in the Lord, my Soul shall be joyful in my GOD, for he hath cloathed me with the Garments of Salvation, he hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness; as a Bridegroom decketh himself with Ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth herself with her Jewels: For as the Earth bringeth forth her Bud, and as the Garden causeth the Things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord GOD will cause Righteousness and Praise to spring forth before all the Nations.* Isa. lxi. 10. In Words much to the same Purpose doth St John describe the Marriage of the Lamb. *Let us be glad and rejoyce, and give Honour to him, for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine Linen, clean and white; for the fine Linen is the Righteousness of Saints.* Rev. xix. 7, 8. And that metaphorical Description of the Spouse of Christ, which Solomon gives us in his *Canticles*, is of the same Nature; in which he not only uses many strong Figures to set off her Charms, but addresses her in plain Language, *Thou art ALL FAIR, my Love, there is NO SPOT in thee,* Ch. iv. 7. And none other than this is that glorious Church mentioned by St Paul. Eph. v. 27. *WITHOUT SPOT, or Wrinkle, or any such Thing, but such as is holy and without Blemish.* These several Characters and Descriptions imply such a consummate Pitch of outward

the Recovery of fallen Man. 323

ward Splendor and inward Purity as can in no Justice or Propriety of Speech, be applicable to any past State of the Church; therefore they must be meant of some future State, and that it will be an earthly one, will be shewn hereafter.

Nor, as I said, doth the Scripture less magnify the perfect Harmony and Peaceableness of this future State of the Church, the most happy Effect that can be produced by Religion among Men, consider'd as sociable Creatures. This follows from the Character of Unity above-mentioned: But there are many express Testimonies to this purpose.

Isaiab dwells much upon this Subject. Thus Chap. ii. 4. He prophesieth that, *it shall come to pass in the last Days—that they shall beat their Swords into Ploughshares, and their Spears into Pruning-hooks; Nation shall not lift up Sword against Nation, neither shall they learn War any more.* To which *Micah* adds, *But they shall sit every Man under his Vine and under his Fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid, for the Mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it.* Chap. iv. 4. So again, *I will make thy Officers Peace, and thine Exactors Righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy Land, Wasting nor Destruction within thy Borders; but thou shalt call thy Walls Salvation, and thy Gates Praise.* *Isa.* lx. 17, 18. And Ch. lxvi. 12. *Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will extend Peace to her like a River,*

324 *Scripture-Proofs of*
and the Glory of the Gentiles like a flowing
Stream.

To the same Purpose the Psalmist likewise prophesieth concerning *Christ's Kingdom*, that *the Mountains shall bring Peace to the People, and that in his Days there shall be Abundance of Peace, so long as the Moon endureth.* Ps. lxxii. 3, 7. And this is no more than the natural Fruit of that State of Righteousness, to which, as we have seen, the Church will then be advanced; *For the Work of Righteousness shall be Peace, and the Effect of Righteousness, Quietness and Assurance for ever.* Isa. xxxii. 17. Agreeable hereto, in the Metaphorical Sense, is that remarkable Prophecy which we have in the xi Chap. of *Isaiah*, tho' I cannot consent to exclude the literal Sense, which I shall consider hereafter. *The Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lie down with the Kid; and the Calf, and the young Lion, and the Fatling together, and a little Child shall lead them. And the Cow, and the Bear shall feed, their young Ones shall lie down together, and the Lion shall eat Straw like the Ox. And the Sucking Child shall play on the Hole of the Asp, and the weaned Child shall put his Hand on the Cockatrice-Den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy Mountain.* Isa. xi. 6,—9.

Calvin, whose Expositions of the Prophecies are esteemed the most judicious * and valuable

* See the Preface to the third Volume of *Poole's Synopsis*.

the Recovery of fallen Man. 325

luable of all his Works, and who often talks as if he expected a Renovation of the World by means of the Christian Dispensation, expresses himself, in his Interpretation of this Place, to this Effect—

‘ The Prophet here promiseth a blessed Restoration of the World; for he describes the good Order and Harmony which subsisted at the Beginning of the World, before the Disobedience of Man occasioned that unhappy Subversion of it under which we now groan—Therefore at *Christ’s* coming to reconcile the World to GOD by abolishing the Curse, the Restoration of that perfect State is not improperly attributed to him—Again, tho’ *Isaiab* says, that there shall be a mutual Agreement between wild and tame Beasts, yet what he principally means is, that *Christ’s* Subjects will harbour no injurious Thoughts, nor retain any Fierceness or Inhumanity in their Tempers. For if it will be in the Power of *Christ* to tame and pacify the brute Beasts, much more will he be able to promote a brotherly Union of Affections among Men, who shall be all governed by the same Spirit of Meekness*.’

When this happy State of Things shall take place, there will then indeed be *Peace*

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* *Prophetæ Oratio perinde est ac si promitteret beatam Mundi Reparationem. Ordinem enim describit qualis fuit ab Initio, antequam hominis Defectione accideret tristis et infelix Conversio, sub quâ nunc gemimus—Quum ergo venerit Christus, ut abolita Maledictione Mundum reconciliaret Deo, non abs re ei tribuitur Instauratio perfecti Status. &c.*

326 *Scripture-Proofs of*

upon Earth and good Will towards Men. The Weak shall no more become a Prey to the Strong, nor shall the Simple fall into the Snare of the Crafty. None shall be so wicked as to thirst after innocent Blood ; none shall oppress, or any way injure another on the one Hand, neither shall there be any Fear, Jealousy, or Distrust on the Other : All Discord and Faction shall die away, and all Parties shall be united : The most opposite Interests and Tempers shall be reconciled, and the most untoward and untractable Spirits shall become tame and governable. In a Word, Love and Charity shall universally prevail, and a perfect Harmony shall reign among Men. *Then the Fierceness of Man shall turn to thy Praise, O Lord, and the Fierceness of them thou shalt refrain.*

To proceed now to some other Testimonies of this renovated State—St Peter, in his Sermon to the Jews, exhorts them in this manner—*Repent and be converted, to the blotting out of your Sins, that the Times or Seasons of REFRESHING may come from the Presence of the Lord, and that he may send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you : Whom the Heaven must receive until the Times of RESTITUTION of all Things, which GOD hath spoken by the Mouth of all his holy Prophets, since the World began.* Acts iii. 19, 20, 21. The original Words are thus render'd by several of the best Commentators, who make the *Times of refreshing, and the Coming of Christ*

the Recovery of fallen Man. 327

Christ to depend upon the Repentance and Reformation of the World, and to be hastened forwards by it. And it is observable, that this Doctrine is none other than what is elsewhere delivered by the same Apostle--*Seeing then that all these Things shall be dissolved, what manner of Persons ought ye to be in all holy Conversation and Godliness, looking for, and hastning the Coming of the Day of God.* 2 Pet. iii. 11, 12. But this Text will be more particularly considered hereafter. As *the Times of refreshing* is an Expression used by the *Hebrews* to signify any remarkable Deliverance; so why may it not be here meant of the Deliverance of human Nature from the Evils of the Fall, in which Sense it seems best to agree with the other parallel Expression, *the Times of Restitution of all Things*? For both Expressions refer to the same Season, or Period, and are explanatory of each other.

Dr *Whitby* says, these Words cannot be meant of a Restitution of all Things to their former State.* But I see no Reason from any Thing he offers, why they should be understood any otherwise, this being the plain obvious Sense of the Words. And they contain so direct a Proof of the Point in hand, that I must own it is something strange, how learned Men could misunderstand or overlook them. To me this Text seems so strong and weighty, that tho' it stood alone, without any others to support it, I should think it of

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* *Treatise of the true Millenium.* p. 736.

itself a sufficient Foundation for the Doctrine I have advanced, provided on the other Hand there were none to contradict it, as I know not of any. But as it is here said that *GOD hath spoken of these Times of Restitution of all Things by the Mouth of all his holy Prophets*, so I have produced some of these Prophecies already, and shall hereafter produce more.

I cannot therefore think with this learned Author, that there is any Impropriety in saying there will be a Restitution of all Things to their former State, which *GOD hath spoken of, &c.* But as he thought this made against his Hypothesis, which in Truth it did not, he therefore has recourse to Authorities for understanding the Word ἀποκατάστασις in a different Sense, viz. as signifying a *Perfecting* or *Consummating*, &c. which Sense tho' I do not exclude, yet I see no Reason for departing from the primary and natural Signification of the Word. I agree with him that Christ is to continue in Heaven till the Completion, or Consummation of all Things spoken by the holy Prophets; and therefore till the Restitution of all Things to their former State be likewise completed: For I do not understand this Text, as some do, as if this Restitution were to *commence*, but that it is to be *finished* and *perfected* at the second Coming of our Saviour; which will not, by what we learn from Scripture, be attended with a Restitution of all Things to their former State, as its Consequence

the Recovery of fallen Man. 329

quence; but with a total Change of them to something quite different from what they ever were before.

Αποκατάστασις is an astronomical Term made Use of to express the annual Revolutions, real or apparent, of the heavenly Bodies; which having performed, they are restored to and replaced in the same Point of the Heavens from which they set out; which may serve to give us a clearer Idea of it in this place.

And it is observable, that the great mundane Revolution * above-mentioned, p. 216. when the *Annus Magnus* shall be completed, being called by the Name of Αποκατάστασις, κατ' ἐξοχὴν; or Αποκατάστασις κοσμικὴ, this Notion seems to be alluded to by St Peter in the Text, since he makes Use of the same Term, Αποκατάστασις πάντων; but whether that be the grand Period which the Holy Ghost here points to, must remain among the inscrutable *Arcana* of the Almighty. It is not however improbable from the Analogy which runs thro' the whole Creation, and which the natural and moral World bear to each other, that the celestial and terrestrial, the material and spiritual Restitution do keep Pace, and shall be made to meet and coincide with each other.

But

* This Revolution, ascribed by the Antients to the heavenly Bodies, but which the Moderns have discovered to be performed by a slow retrograde Motion of the Earth from East to West, will according to astronomical Calculation take up 25920 Years in completing.

But this Restoration and Renovation of the natural and moral World, which is here only occasionally mentioned, is moreover directly prophesied of, by *Isaiab* in the *Old Testament* and by *St John* and *St Peter* in the *New*, under the Emblem of NEW HEAVENS and a NEW EARTH.

But before I enter upon the Consideration of these Prophecies, I shall bestow a few Thoughts upon the Saints reigning with Christ a THOUSAND YEARS. This is often confounded with the NEW HEAVENS and EARTH, and thought to have Relation to the same State of the World, being but a different Expression of the same Thing.

But tho' they are near a Kin to each other, yet I take them to point at two distinct Periods. My Reason for it is, that they are sufficiently distinguished by *St John*, who is the only inspired Writer that mentions this THOUSAND YEARS REIGN. For 1. He places a great and remarkable Revolution between this millennial State, and that represented by the NEW HEAVENS and EARTH. 2. This latter is not by him, or either of the other two sacred Authors confined to a thousand Years, as the former precisely is. 3. There are some internal Marks of Difference between them, which I shall have occasion to mention hereafter.

I shall therefore take the Liberty of considering these two Prophecies apart, and shall bestow upon them a distinct Chapter.

C H A P.

C H A P. XIII.

Of the MILLENNIAL STATE and that which is represented by NEW HEAVENS and a NEW EARTH: Wherein some Errors relating to these States are attempted to be rectified, and the true Notions of them stated.

I AM first to consider that Prophecy, or prophetic Vision relating to the MILLENNIAL STATE: Which we have in Revel. xx. 1.—6. *And I saw an Angel come down from Heaven—And he laid hold on the Dragon that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand Years,—that he should deceive the Nations no more, till the thousand Years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little Season. And I saw Thrones and they sat upon them, and Judgment was given unto them: And I saw the Souls of them that were beheaded for the Witness of Jesus,—and they lived, and reigned, with Christ a thousand Years. But the Rest of the Dead lived not again till the thousand Years were finished. This is the first Resurrection. Blessed and Holy is he*

he that hath Part in the first Resurrection: on such the second Death hath no Power, but they shall be Priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand Years.

The learned Reader needs not be informed, that by too close and literal an Interpretation of these Words, an Opinion obtained very early in the Church, and, as *Justin Martyr* testifies,* prevailed so universally that it was entertained by all who were esteemed strictly Orthodox, *viz.* That there should be a true and literal Resurrection of the primitive Martyrs—that they should reign with Christ upon Earth, who should be personally present with them—and enjoy all manner of worldly Felicity, for the Space of a thousand Years before the general Resurrection.

And tho' this Doctrine of a *Millennium*, as it is called, hath been revived and refined in these latter Ages, yet is it at present, I think, generally laid aside, and this Passage is understood in a more qualified and rational manner, and in such a Sense as is more agreeable to the Analogy of Faith.

Nor doth this Liberty in departing from the Sense of the Fathers, argue any Contempt of their Judgment on the one Hand, nor on the other invalidate their Authority in other respects. It is true, apostolical Tradition, as well as Scripture, is pleaded for this Doctrine.

Thus

* Εγὼ δὲ καὶ ἑῖς πνες εἶπὺν ὁρδογνώμονες κατὰ πάντα
 χριστιανοί, καὶ σαρκὸς ἀνάστασις γενήσασθαι ἐπισόμεθα, καὶ χίλια
 ἔτη. &c.

Dial. cum Tryph. Jud.

Thus *Irenæus* describing the millennial State, says, 'That then the just rising from the Dead shall reign; when the Creature likewise being renewed and set at Liberty shall yield Plenty and Abundance of all Things, being blessed with the Dew of Heaven, and a great Fertility of the Earth, as those Ecclesiasticks have related, who, having seen St *John*, the Disciple of our Lord, heard of him what our Lord had taught concerning those Times.' *

Indeed the Relation, which follows as our Saviour's own Words concerning the prodigious Increase of the Fruits of the Earth, seems too hyperbolical to have been delivered by him: And therefore it is probable that *Papias*, on whose Credit it stands, and who is represented by *Eusebius* as a Man of more Rhetorick than Judgment—*Papias*, I say, might in the Wantonness of his Fancy, have affected to put our Saviour's Doctrine into his own extravagant Dress.

Notwithstanding, as no candid Man will suppose that he built without any Foundation, we may from this Testimony infer, that our Lord had frequently entertain'd his Disciples, and St *John* his likewise, with the happy and flourishing State to which the World should at length

* *Regnabunt Iusti surgentes a Mortuis; quando & Creatura renovata & liberata Multitudinem fructificabit universæ Esæ, ex Rore Cæli, & ex Fertilitate Terræ, quemadmodum Presbyteri meminerunt, qui Johannem Discipulum Domini viderunt, audisse se ab eo, quemadmodum de Temporibus illis docebat Dominus.*

length be brought by the *Messiah's* Reign. But as this was of the Nature of Prophecy, it was not fit it should be delivered in the same plain simple manner with other more practical Truths; and therefore the Reviviscence of the Church in order to enjoy these blessed Times, after a long Persecution, was represented in an allegorical manner, by a Resurrection of its Members. Is it therefore any Wonder that they should mistake the Letter for the Figure *? Or is it any great Impeachment of their Understandings? The acutest Moderns might easily fall into the same Error, and it might employ the Labours of many learned Men for a Succession of Ages, as it hath done, to rectify the Mistake. They were right as to the Doctrine, and err'd only in their Manner of explaining it. Which Error, by the Way, serves this purpose, viz. to prove the Genuineness of this Passage and Book of *St John*, since it hence appears how consonant it is with the Doctrine he delivered by Word of Mouth.

The learned Dr *Whitby* has written a *Treatise of the true Millennium*, in which, after giving an Account of the *Millennium* of the Antients, he tells us, Ch. ii. What his Notion of it is. viz. 'That after the Fall of *Antichrist*, there shall be such a glorious State of the Church, by the Conversion of the Jews

* It is thus that *Eusebius* accounts for *Papias* his Mistake of the Apostles Doctrine, who says of him, τὰς ἀποστολικὰς παραδεξάμενον διηγήσας, τὰ ἐν ὑποδείγμασι μουσικῶς ἐξηγημένα μὴ συνεχῶς λέγειν.
Eccles. Hist. Lib. iii. c. 39.

‘ Jews to the Christian Faith, as shall be to it
‘ *Life from the Dead*—That it shall then
‘ flourish in Peace and Plenty, in Righteous-
‘ ness and Holiness, and in a pious Offspring—
‘ That then shall begin a glorious and undisturbed
‘ Reign of Christ over both Jew and
‘ Gentile, to continue a thousand Years, during
‘ the Time of Satan’s Bondage—And
‘ that, as *John* the Baptist was *Elias*, because
‘ he came in the Spirit and Power of *Elias* ;
‘ so shall this be the Church of the Martyrs,
‘ and of those who had not received the Mark
‘ of the Beast, because of its entire Freedom
‘ from all the Doctrines and Practices of the
‘ Antichristian Church, and because the Spirit
‘ and Purity of the Times of the primitive
‘ Martyrs shall return.’

In proof of this Doctrine he shews, ‘ That
‘ as the Jewish Church was formerly the Chief
‘ of all Churches, so it shall become a famous
‘ Church again, by the Conversion of the
‘ Jews to the Christian Faith—That the Description
‘ of this their Conversion made by
‘ their own Prophets and Writers answers fully
‘ to the *Millennium* of *St. John*, which he speaks
‘ of in the very Words of the said Prophets—
‘ And that the Characters which the Patrons of
‘ the *Millennium* give of those Times, accord
‘ exactly with the Characters given by the
‘ Prophets of the Conversion of the Jews.’ He
‘ likewise answers all the Arguments from
‘ Scripture for a literal Resurrection of the
‘ Martyrs, and their millennial Reign, and pro-
‘ duce

duces several Arguments against it ; particularly that it is inconsistent with the Genius of the Christian Faith, and the Nature of the Gospel-Promises.

What this Hypothesis chiefly turns upon, is, the Interpreting of the Resurrection of the Martyrs in an allegorical, not literal Sense. Now in Justification of this Exposition he proves, that the Resurrection of *the two Witnesses*. Rev. xi. 7, 11. is allowed to be understood in this Sense, and that this is the prophetic Style, by which the Scripture constantly represents the glorious Restoration of God's Church and People : For the Conversion of the Jews is frequently set forth as a Reviviscence and Resurrection of their dead Church and Nation by the *Messiah* : And St Paul moreover, speaking of this their Conversion, saith it shall be, even to the Gentiles, *Life from the Dead*. But I refer the Reader to the Treatise itself.

Hence it may be safely concluded, that the millennial State is none other than this : When the Power of Satan shall be restrained from deceiving the Nations, and Antichrist shall be destroyed ; so that neither the Idolatries and Impieties of the Church of *Rome*, nor the Impostures of *Mahomet* shall any longer obstruct the Reception of Christianity. Then both *Jews* and *Gentiles* shall flow into the Church, and enjoy great Peace, Plenty, and all manner of outward Prosperity ; as well as be endued with great Knowledge and Righte-
ous-

ousness, and all other spiritual Gifts and Graces; and in this happy State shall reign, during the Time specified, under the special Guidance and Direction; the influential, tho' not personal Presence of Christ, their Head.

The *Jews* particularly shall then be restored to their own Land—shall have their City and Temple rebuilt, but after the Christian Model, as hath been already shewn,—be united with the Rest of the World in one Theocracy under Christ, the common Head and King of both—but with this Difference, that under this Theocracy the Judaical Christians shall enjoy some peculiar Privileges above all other Christians. For *the Law shall* once more go forth from Jerusalem. Isa. ii. 3. Micah iv. 2. and the *Holy and beloved City* shall again become *the Joy of the whole Earth*. Pl. xlviii. 2. *The Mother of us all*, and the *Metropolis* of the whole Christian World.*

It may be thought a vain and idle Curiosity to enquire, *When these Things shall be?* But since the holy Spirit hath thought fit to deliver so many prophetic Writings to his Church, they undoubtedly become the Object of our Study and Meditation as well as other Parts of Scripture, especially since a Blessing is pronounced upon all who duly search into them. Rev. i. 3. And why the Calculation

* If the Christian Reader thinks all this is too much to believe concerning them, let him farther consult, Isa. xlix. 22, 23. lv. 5. lx. 3.—16. lxi. 5, 6. lxii. 2. lxvi. 12, 20.—24. Jer. iii. 17, And *Allen's State of the Church in future Ages*. p. 200.

tion of the Accomplishment of Prophecies, for the Exercise of our Faith, as well as Knowledge, is not as edifying and commendable an Employment, as Calculations of less consequence, with which ingenious Men amuse themselves, I am to learn.

I shall therefore presume upon the Reader's Candor and Indulgence, while I offer a Conjecture concerning the Commencement of the happy Days described above, and the great and remarkable Revolution which is to precede it, I mean the Fall of *Antichrist*. For it appears from *Dan. vii.* that the *Messiah's* Kingdom is to be erected upon the Ruins of that of *Antichrist*: And the *Marriage of the Lamb*. *Rev. xix.* and the millennial Reign of *Christ*. *Ch. xx.* succeed the Destruction of the great *Whore*, and the Fall of *Babylon*. *Ch. xxvii. xxviii.* And that these Prophecies of *Daniel* and *St John* relate both to the same Event, to one and the same Kingdom of the *Messiah*, appears from several internal Characters in them compared together.

Daniel describes his Vision in these Words, *Ch. vii. 9. The Ancient of Days did sit—whose Throne was like the fiery Flame, &c.* And *v. 22. Judgement was given to the Saints of the most High—St John* *Rev. xv. 4.* describes his thus—I saw Thrones, and they sat upon them, and Judgment was given unto them. It follows in *Daniel—And the Time came that the Saints possessed the Kingdom,* and *v. 27. The Kingdom and Dominion, and Great-*

Millennium explained. 339

*Greatness of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven shall be given to the People of the Saints of the most High. In the Revelations it is said, That those that had not worshipped the Beast, &c. reigned with Christ a thousand Years. v. 4. and, that they shall be Priests of God, and of Christ. v. 6. **

But here it will be readily objected, That in *Rev. xx.* the Reign of the Saints is fixed to the determined Period of a thousand Years, whereas in *Daniel* it is said, *that the Saints of the most High shall take the Kingdom and possess it for ever and ever.* In answer to this, let it be observed, that both these Reigns commence at the same Time, *viz.* at the Destruction of the Kingdom of *Antichrist*, as hath been already observed: And therefore they must be one and the same, unless we make the *Messiah* to have two Kingdoms distinct from and contemporary with each other. And tho' a Period seems to be set to it in the one Place, and none in the Other, yet we are not hence to conclude, that it is to have its final Dissolution at the End of that Period, but only a short Interruption during the *little Season* of Satan's Enlargement, *Rev. xx. 3.* after which it is to be continued: And accordingly it is expressly said, *Ch. xxii. 5. That the Servants of the Lamb shall reign for ever and ever.* To which we may add, that

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* If the Reader consults Mr Mede's *Comment. Apocalyp.* p. 532. he will find his Sense of these Prophecies to be the same, who there draws much the same Parallel between them.

the Prophecies of *Daniel*, being, as Mr *Mede* somewhere calls them, *Apocalypsis contracta*, we are not to expect him to be so particular and explicit in the Delivery of them, as *St John*, to whom the Subject of them was more fully and openly revealed. To proceed,

In order to help our Enquiry concerning the Commencement of the millennial Reign, it will be proper previously to enquire, when that of *Antichrist* is to have its Period, which being first in order of Time may serve as a Clue to lead us to the other.

It is generally agreed that the Reign of *Antichrist* is foretold, both by *Daniel* and *St John*, to last 1260 Years. And were the Commencement of this Period as easily to be fixed, there would be no Difficulty in the Calculation. The Year of our Lord 606 is the Year from which learned Men now generally date it; as from his Rise. For in that Year it was that *Pope Boniface III.* by a pretended Grant of the Emperor *Phocas*, usurped the Title of Universal Bishop, and Supreme Head of the Christian Church. But *Antichrist* was risen long before this, for *St John* intimates that he was come even in his Time, 1 *Ep.* ii. 18.—iv. 5. And the judicious *Dr Clark* observes, from the Prophecies relating hereto, that the 1260 Years are not to be reckoned from the *Rise*, but from the *Establishment* of *Antichrist* in the Height of his Power. *

Now

* See *Dr Clark's Discourse on the Connection of Prophecies.*

Millennium explained. 341

Now the Question is, When *Antichrist* may be said to have been established? St *John* says, *Rev. xiii. 18.* That *the Number of the Beast is 666.* The Number of the Beast—What can this mean? Several learned Men have amused themselves with finding out Names for him, the several Letters of which make up that precise Number, as mention is made likewise of *the Number of his Name.*

But however successful they have been herein, I cannot think that this precise Number would be pitched upon for the Sake of the Name only, and that so much Stress would be laid upon it, unless it were of some farther Use, and alluded to something of greater Importance.

Therefore others * understand this particular Number to signify the *full Age of the Beast, viz.* The Year of our Lord in which he was arrived at the Maturity of his Strength and Power; and accordingly they seem apprehensive that his Reign ought to be computed from hence.

And indeed, the Transactions of this Year furnish sufficient Grounds for this Supposition. For after many other idolatrous and superstitious Innovations, in the Year 666 it was, that to complete and secure this Mystery of Iniquity, to damp the Devotions, and lock up the Understandings of the People in Ignorance

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* *Vide Synopsis Criticorum in locum.*

norance, the Latin Service was every where established.

But on the other hand, the Year 606 bidding fair for the Commencement of the Computation, being the supposed Time of the Rise of *Antichrist*, they set themselves to reconcile these two Periods, and make them coincide with each other : Which they did by beginning to compute the 666 Years, 60 Years before the Christian *Æra*. But they should not have needed to betake themselves to so absurd a Shift, if they had not been under the important Error which Dr *Clark* takes Notice of, that the 1260 Years took their Beginning from the supposed Rise, not Establishment of *Antichrist*.

To compute, therefore, from the Year of our Lord 666, the full Age of the Beast, his Fall is to happen A. D. MDCCCLXXVI.

There are in the viii. and xii. Chapters of *Daniel*, several other Predictions to be accomplished in certain determinate Periods of Time, which tho' probably once fulfilled in the short Persecution of the *Jewish Church* by *Antiochus Epiphanes* ; yet as he was a Type of *Antichrist*, I cannot help thinking that they are to have a second Accomplishment under the Christian Dispensation, and that they finally relate to Events yet to come.

Chap. xii. 11. We are told, that *from the Time the daily Sacrifice shall be taken away, and the Abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be 1290 Days, i. e. Years ;* which

Millennium explained 343

which being thirty Years more than the Term above-mentioned, fixed both by *Daniel* and *St John* for the Downfall of *Antichrist*, perhaps he is not entirely to be destroyed at the End of the 1260, but that he is to have his second and final Overthrow at the End of the 1290 Years. *i. e. A. D. 1956.* Or perhaps the one Prediction relates to the Destruction of the *Western*, and the other to that of the *Eastern Branch of Antichrist*; when the *Rest of the Beasts, whose Lives were prolonged for a Season and Time (Dan. vii. 12.) shall be destroyed.*

In the next verse follows another Prediction, *Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 Days:* By which Time probably the Peace of the Church will be settled after the Commotions occasioned by such great Revolutions, and better and happier Days will commence; for the Prophecy plainly points at some blessed and joyful Period.

And what Period can better answer that Character than the millennial Reign of the *Messiah*, and the Establishment of his Kingdom; when the *Marriage of the Lamb* shall be celebrated, and the *Saints of the most High shall possess the Kingdom*, and be invested with the highest Honours of it? When the People of God shall enjoy that *Sabbatism* which is in Reserve for them, *Heb. iv. 9.* and live in a State of perfect Tranquillity and Security, having nothing to fear from their grand Adversary, but on the contrary shall triumph over his Impotency to hurt them.

Now, if from the Year of our Lord 666, we reckon 1335 Years, this brings us down to *A. D. MMI*; which falls in with the very first Year of the seventh Millenary of the World's Age, according to Archbishop *Usher's* Calculation; which, from the Traditions, Types, and Allusions relating to it, and taken Notice of Ch. ix. is supposed to be the happy *Millennium*.

About this Time therefore we may conclude, that the *Gentiles* will begin to flow apace into the Church of Christ; and when the *Fulness of the Gentiles shall be come in*, then the *Jews* likewise shall be converted; and both together will make *one Fold under one Shepherd*, Jesus Christ the Righteous.

How long a Time the Conversion of the *Gentiles* first, and of the *Jews* afterwards, will take up is difficult to say.

Some learned Men think, that the Conversion of the *Jews* will be sudden,* and it must be owned that they seem to have some Countenance from Scripture for their Opinion. This they suppose to be the Sense of this Passage in *Isaiah*, *Before she travailed, she brought forth: Before her Pain came, she was delivered of a Man-child. Who hath heard such a Thing? Who hath seen such Things? Shall the Earth be made to bring forth in one Day? Or shall a Nation be born at once? For as soon*

* See Dr *Scott's* Christian Life. Vol. iii. p. 488. And Dr *Jackson* is of the same Opinion.

soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her Children, Isa. lxi. 8.

But however speedy their Conversion will be, the Assembling of them together from all the known Regions of the Earth where they lie dispersed—Their Return to the holy Land—their Settlement in it—The Cleansing of the Sanctuary—The Rebuilding of their City and Temple—The settling a Form of outward Polity and Government—All these are Works of Time; insomuch that it may reasonably be supposed that some Centuries of the seventh Millenary may pass before their thorough Re-establishment will be accomplished: Which will appear to be the more probable, if it be considered that the like Work was near one Century in accomplishing, when their Ancestors returned from only a seventy Years Captivity, when the Desolation must be supposed to have been much less than this of so many Generations will be. For, from *Cyrus* his Proclamation for the Return of the *Jews* to their own Countrey to build the Temple, *Ezra* i. till *Nehemiah* had, by the Permission of *Artaxerxes*, finished the building of the Gates and Walls, and made all proper Regulations, was 93 Years.

But to give this Matter the utmost Degree of Confirmation, of which it is capable, I think we have an express Prophecy, which fixes the very Year of the *Jews* Restoration and complete Establishment. For I apprehend, that that hitherto obscure Prophecy contained

tained in *Dan.* viii. 14. can relate to none other than this great and remarkable Event. And I am the more confirmed herein, because learned Men have not been able to account for it satisfactorily, as relating either to the Persecution of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, or *Antichrist*; and hence the great *Scaliger* ingenuously own'd, that this Prophecy was the only one in the whole Book of *Daniel*, which proved too hard for him.

The peculiar Solemnity with which it is introduced sufficiently denotes the Importance of it. v. 13. *Then I heard one Saint speaking, and another Saint said unto that certain Saint which spake, How long shall be the Vision concerning the daily Sacrifice, and the Transgression of Desolation, to give both the Sanctuary and the Host to be troden under Foot? And he said unto me, Unto 2300 Days; then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed.* And v. 26. the Vision is said to be for many Days, and therefore he is ordered to shut it up, which shews that it refers to some distant Period.

Therefore the *Transgression of Desolation* here principally meant, I think, can be none other than the Desolation and Destruction of *Jerusalem* by *Titus*, described in the latter part of the next Chapter in much the same Words: And likewise in *Matt.* xxiv, where among other Characters of it, it is said, that *the Sun shall be darkened, and the Moon shall*

Millennium explained. 347

shall not give her Light, and the Stars shall fall from Heaven, and the Powers of the Heavens shall be shaken, v. 29.

In like manner it is here said v. 10. That the Horn waxed great, even to the Host of Heaven, and it cast down some of the Host, and of the Stars to the Ground, and stamp upon them. In Luke xxi. 24. Jerusalem is said to be troden down of the Gentiles, so here the Sanctuary and Host are troden under Foot, v. 13. And in Chap. xii. 7. we have a Key to the Whole, where it is said, that all these Things (the foregoing Prophecies) shall not be finished, till He shall have accomplished to scatter the Power of the holy People, that is, till the End of the Term of their Dispersion. Therefore reckoning 2300 Years from the Destruction of Jerusalem, which happened A. D. 70. the Restoration of the Jews will not be fully accomplished till A. D. 2370.—Then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed, and the Land shall have enjoyed her Sabbaths, Lev. xxvi. 34, 43.

After all, I am far from determining any thing in so obscure and mystical a matter. 'Those that shall live to see the Extirpation 'of Antichrist and the subsequent Events (to use the Words of a learned Author well skilled in the prophetical Writings) 'will 'best be able to unfold this Matter, it being 'of the Nature of such Prophecies not thoroughly to be understood, till they are thoroughly fulfilled.* When

* *Prideaux Connect. Part ii. Book iii. sub fine.*

Whenever therefore the millennial Period shall commence we must needs have very exalted Ideas of human Nature, when arrived at that State. For how quick must its Progress towards Perfection then be? And how considerable, during so long a Term of Exemption from Satan's Temptations? When he shall be no more allowed to *go about like a roaring Lion*, but be restrained from practising his Wiles, and all his fiery Darts shall be quenched. Then, and not before, will be fully and effectually performed the Oath which God swore to *Abraham*, that his Seed *being delivered out of the Hands of their Enemies, might serve him without Fear. In Holiness and Righteousness before him all the Days of their Lives*, Luke i. 73, 74, 75. In a Word, there shall then be nothing to retard, but every Thing concurring to animate and encourage this highly favoured Generation to *proceed from Strength to Strength, and from Glory to Glory? Blessed and holy is he that hath Part in this first Resurrection!* Surely Mankind will by this Time have fully recovered the original Perfection of their Nature, and overcome all Remains of their primitive Disorder.

No: Things are not yet ripe enough to make that Conclusion. Some Seeds of the old Leaven still lye concealed, which upon Satan's Release, after the Expiration of his thousand Years Imprisonment, break out afresh and discover themselves. For then *the Rest of the Dead, the Synagogue of Satan,*
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revived, v. 5. *i. e.* when Satan upon his Enlargement went out to deceive the Nations, he found Multitudes, v. 8. who had passed for plausible Christians, during their Season of Exemption from his Temptations, who had notwithstanding, so much Depravity in their Hearts, as to be capable of being perverted by him, and made his Instruments to persecute the true Religion, breathing the same Spirit of Enmity against it, with those who had been slain. Ch. xix. 21. And ever so little, Attention to the Place before us will convince us, that it is with respect to *these*, to the *Rest of the Dead*, who lived again after the thousand Years were finished v. 5. or rather to the Revival of the same wicked Spirit; and not with respect to the *general Resurrection*, that the living of the Souls of them that were beheaded, *i. e.* of the dead Church, is called the *first Resurrection*. So that here are plainly, a *first* and *second Resurrection*, both to be understood in the same metaphorical Sense, entirely exclusive of the *general Resurrection*, to which this Place bears no Relation.

As this is to be the last Effort of Satan, so will it be the most vigorous and formidable; for we are told, that *He shall go out to deceive the Nations which are in the four Quarters of the Earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to Battle, the Number of whom is as the Sand of the Sea. And they went up on the Breadth of the Earth,*
and

and compassed the Camp of the Saints about, and the beloved City, v. 8, 9. But his malicious Attempts will be soon blasted ; for he will be loosed but for a little Season, v. 3. and then Fire shall come down from God out of Heaven, and devour him and his Accomplices.

After this the Devil shall be consigned to the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, where, together with the *Beast* and *false Prophet*, he shall be doom'd to endure perpetual and everlasting Torments.

The Judgment inflicted upon this rebellious Host, will be so remarkable, that presently follows a Vision, as it is generally understood, of the *last Judgment* ; and to which undoubtedly it finally belongs, there not being a more solemn Description of it in any Part of Scripture.

But I am apt to think it shall have its primary Completion in the Condemnation of *Gog* and *Magog*, and their Armies ; at least, that it is here connected with the History of their Punishment to denote the Severity of it. For it is not unusual in Scripture to describe great and terrible Judgments in Terms suitable to the final Judgment. Thus is the Judgment and Destruction of *Antichrist* described, *Dan. vii. 9, 10, 11.* And such is the Description of the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, *Matt. xxiv.* Such likewise is that of the Judgment inflicted on this same *Gog* and *Magog*, *Ezek. xxxviii. 20, 22.* But I cannot be per-

Millennium explained. 351

persuaded, to think with some learned Men*, that the End of the World and the final Judgment is in the Order of Things immediately to succeed this dismal *Catastrophe* of theirs. Far otherwise; as any one will be convinced who reads the xxxviii and xxxix Chapters of *Ezekiel*, where besides many other Arguments, Mention is made that the House of *Israel* should be *seven Months* in burying them, and *cleansing the Land*, Chap. xxxix. 12. and *seven Years* in *Burning their Arms*, which could not be, if the World were burnt before. Nay, the best and most glorious Scene of it is still behind, and perhaps too that which is to be of much the longest Continuance.

This is that which is represented by NEW HEAVENS and a NEW EARTH. *And I saw a new Heaven, and a new Earth, saith St John, for the first Heaven and the first Earth were passed away—And I John saw the holy City, new Jerusalem, coming down from GOD out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband. And I heard a great Voice out of Heaven, saying, Behold the Tabernacle of GOD is with Men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his People, and GOD himself shall be with them, and be their GOD, Rev. xxi. 1, 2, 3.*

We have much the same Description of this happy State in *Isa. xlv. 17, &c.* and *2 Pet. iii. 13.*

And

* Dr Scott's Christian Life Vol. iii. p. 491.

And that this is a State quite different from, and of more exalted Perfection than, the *Millennial State* is evident, not only from the Reasons above-mentioned. p. 330. but also,

1. Because Satan is to be finally condemned to everlasting Torments in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone before the Commencement of this State: And not bound for a *Time*, but *for ever*, to be let loose no more; so that this blessed Generation shall be entirely exempt from his Temptations.

2. Because *there shall in no wise enter into the New Jerusalem, any Thing that defileth, that worketh Abomination or maketh a Lye.* Ch. xxi. 27. But this cannot be said of the *millennial State*, since Satan with his abominable Train is, as we have seen, to enter and defile it.

3. Because in the *millennial State* the Saints are said to reign only a thousand Years; but in this which succeeds, it is said, *they shall reign for ever and ever. i. e.* for an indefinite Number of Ages, Ch. xxii. 5.

4. The Blessedness of the *millennial State* consists in this, that on the Subjects of it the second Death shall have no Power: But the Blessedness of the State of new Heavens is such, that Death of no kind shall have Power over them.

On the other hand, it may be said, that as *the Marriage of the Lamb was come, and his Bride had adorned and made herself ready,* Ch. xix. 7. which was before Satan's
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New Heavens and New Earth. 353

Binding, and the Commencement of the *millennial State*—and as it is only the same Thing in a manner which is repeated concerning her in Ch. xxi. therefore that it is only one and the same State which is referr'd to in both Places.

In answer to this let it be consider'd, that tho' the *Lamb's Spouse*, the *New Jerusalem*, might be prepared and espoused to him so long before ; yet as there are degrees of Perfection, so it is not to be supposed, but that during the thousand Years flourishing State, as well as the short succeeding distressed one, she made very considerable Advancements, so as by this Time to be arrived at far more glorious Degrees of Purity and Holiness : And accordingly we find the Descriptions of her at these two several Times to be different from each other. In Ch. xix, *she is arrayed in fine Linen clean and white* : But Ch. xxi. she is garnished with *Gold and Pearls* and all manner of *precious Stones*. v. 19, 21. These then are two different States of the Church—different in Succession of Time, and Degree of Purity and Perfection.

On the other Hand, tho' this State of the NEW HEAVENS &c. be different from the *millennial*, and such glorious Things be said of it, yet there are certain Characters belonging to it, which will not give us leave to think any otherwise of it, than of an earthly State, at which human Nature shall arrive before these

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354 *State of the New Heavens*

Things shall be dissolved, and the World come to an End. Thus much may be inferr'd.

1. From its Name, *a new Earth* and *new Heavens*, the latter signifying the Region of the Air or Atmosphere, which shall then be renewed, and render'd more pure, serene, and temperate.

2. The *new Jerusalem* is here said to come down from GOD out of Heaven. v. 2, 10. the Seat of this State therefore must be upon Earth.

3. *The Kings of the Earth* are said to bring their Glory and Honour into it. v. 21.

4. In the midst of the Street of the *new Jerusalem* is described the *Tree of Life*, the Leaves of which are said to be for the Healing of the Nations. Ch. xxii. 2. Now if the *new Jerusalem* were situated in Heaven, the Inhabitants of it would have no Occasion for any such Remedy; but as GOD makes nothing in vain, so this Provision is a clear Demonstration, that human Nature is still in such a State as is not entirely exempt from all manner of Infirmities both of Body and Mind, but rather that it is in some Measure liable to lesser ones of both, as *Adam* was even in Paradise. See p. 15.

But as it may be inferr'd from the *Tree of Life*, that this is an earthly State, so it no less proves it to be a *paradisiacal* one, corresponding to the first *Paradise*; the *Tree of Life* from which *Adam* was banished in the former, being restored to his Posterity in the latter

and New Earth explained. 355

latter, in all its Intents and Uses, whatever is mystically represented by it. To proceed,

5. *Isaiab* in his Description of this State Ch. lxi. 21. says, *They shall build Houses and inhabit them, and plant Vineyards, and eat the Fruit of them*; and in several other Respects he represents it as an earthly State. And it is observable, that Part of the Description of this State in the *Revelations*, viz. from v. 23. to the End of Chap. xxi. is taken out of the lx. and v. 1. of the lii. Chap. of *Isaiab*, which no one ever imagined were to be understood of any other than an earthly State. From all which we may conclude, that it is to be such a one: Especially if we,

Add 6thly. That there being such frequent Mention of the *Lamb* in this Description of the *new Jerusalem*, and of his *Throne*. Ch. xxii. 1, 3. it from hence appears that he still continues to govern and rule over his Church as *King*, and that he has not yet resign'd his Office of *Mediator*; which, if this were an heavenly State, he must have done, since as soon as the earthly State of the Church is at an End, he is to *deliver up* his *Mediatorial Kingdom* to God the Father, as appears from 1 *Cor.* xv. 24.

Indeed many Commentators of the greatest Note are agreed, that it is none other than an earthly State that is represented by NEW HEAVENS and a NEW EARTH: But then they either apply it to some past State of the Church, or to some future one, which they

356 *State of the New Heavens*

conceive will not much exceed, if they think it will equal the past; the best and purest of which Times do yet fall so vastly short of this Description, that it cannot with any Propriety of Speech be applied to them. Such strong *Metaphors* must surely have an adequate Meaning: But if we examine the common Interpretations given of them, we shall generally find them very flat and unsatisfactory*; which occasioned other learned Men to conclude, that this must be an heavenly State, as they had no Notion of any earthly one, that could answer the Description of it. Allowances undoubtedly ought to be made for figurative Expressions: But then on the other Hand, this I think is one Rule of interpreting them—That the more elevated the Figure is, the more in Proportion ought the Sense likewise to be raised.

But the Style of this Description of the *new Jerusalem* is not altogether Metaphorical: There is no Metaphor in this verse. *And GOD shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and there shall be no more DEATH,*
neither

* *Quàm dilutè & frigidè plerumq; interpretantur Adversarii nostri ea quæ tam splendide & magnificè dicta sunt à Prophetis & à Joanne in Apocalypsi? Omnino juxta illorum Interpretationes verba exuperant Res, & minus adimpleri videtur quàm quod promittitur; Res ipsæ & eventus longè subsidunt infra Majestatem vocum—says Dr Worthington on this Subject, in a Latin Treatise entitled, *Dissertatio de Ecclesiæ in Terris futurâ Felicitate*; in which he solidly confutes the Opinion of Grotius, Hammond, and others, who interpret the Millennium, and the *new-Jerusalem-State*, of some past State of the Church; as he does likewise in his *Observations on the Millennium*. See his *Miscellanies*. p. 24. and 167.*

neither SORROW, nor CRYING, neither shall there be any more PAIN; for the former Things are passed away. Ch. xxi. v. 4. nor here, And there shall be no more CURSE. Ch. xxii. 3. These Words are plain and literal, and yet I do not know of any consistent Exposition that comes up to the full Force of them, upon the Supposition that the *new Jerusalem State* is an earthly one, besides that which I shall presently offer. And that it is not an heavenly one, I have proved already.

Dr Burnet indeed has very exalted Notions of this State, which he likewise supposes to be an earthly one: But then he makes the Seat of it to be, not in this Earth, but a future one, which is to rise out of its Ashes. That towering Genius relish'd no Amusements lower than those of demolishing and re-building Worlds. This present World was by no means for his Purpose: No wonder therefore he was so much prejudiced against it*, and looked upon it as such a Heap of Ruins and Disorder, that it was impossible to restore and rectify it without pulling it all to pieces. And yet he could not help allowing that it was capable of a *Melioration*. 'He does not deny, that there will be a Reformation and Improvement of the Church, both as to Peace, Purity, and Piety—That Knowledge may increase, Mens Minds be enlarged, and Christian Religion better

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* Dr Burnet's Theory of the Earth, Vol. ii. p. 274. & alibi. Eng. Treatise, 8vo. Edit.

358 *State of the New Heavens*

‘understood’—This and a great deal more he allows may be, and hopes will be ere long†.

The Evidences for these Truths were so glaring and irresistible, that he could not withstand them, and therefore he is obliged to make these Concessions: But then he takes care to stop short, and not grant too much, lest he should find the *Millennial State*, together with the *new Heavens and Earth*, too near home; whereby his Fancy would be confined within too narrow Bounds, and be prevented from roaming into other Worlds in quest of them. Therefore he presently adds, ‘Suppose *what Reformation* you *can* in this World, there will still remain many Things inconsistent with the true *Millennial State*. Antichrist, tho’ weaken’d, will not be finally destroy’d till the Coming of our Saviour, nor Satan bound. And there will be always Poverty, Wars, Diseases, Knaves and Hypocrites in this World, which are not consistent with the *New Jerusalem*.’ *ib.*

It is true they are not, if this indeed will be the Case. But is not this begging the Question? For why may not we suppose an Improvement and Renovation of the natural World, as well as of the moral? I am sure we have good Grounds from Scripture for it, as I have already shewn. And if he allows us to suppose what *Reformation* we *can* of the *latter*, we may suppose a Time when there will be no Wars, Knaves, nor Hypocrites even in
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† Review of the Theory, p. 397.

this World. His Argument therefore from the present Constitution of Nature is of no Force, because we suppose Nature shall be greatly changed for the better*.

As to his other Argument, 'That *Antichrist* will not be destroy'd, nor *Satan* bound, 'till the *Coming* of our Saviour'; that is true in one Sense, but not in that which he would have it understood in: For it does not appear from any Part of Scripture, that he will not *come* to destroy *Antichrist*, till he *comes* to Judgment at the End of the World; there being many *Comings* of our Saviour which this Author confounds altogether, making them to be but one and the same. On the contrary it is evident to any one who reads the History of the Fall of *Babylon*, the Seat of *Antichrist*, in the xvii, xviii, xix Chapters of the *Apocalypse*, that it is so far from having any Connection with the End of the World, that it all along supposes the contrary. The Kings who are subject to him, are made to be the Instruments of his Destruction, Ch. xvii. 16. His Votaries are represented as bewailing his Fall, Ch. xviii. 9. &c. which surely supposes that they must survive him. And this is no less implied in the Triumph of the true Church over *Babylon*, v. 20. The same is evident from *Dan.* vii. 11, 12. where after the Account of the Destruction of *Antichrist* (for so Dr B. himself understands the Passage) im-

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* See Theory, &c. p. 274. where these Objections are drawn out to a greater Length.

360 *State of the New Heavens*

mediately is added, *as concerning the rest of the Beasts, they had their Dominion taken away; yet their Lives were prolong'd for a Season and Time.* Besides, as Scripture is express beyond Dispute, that before the End of the World Christ's Kingdom is universally to prevail, and all People, *Jews and Gentiles* to be converted to the Christian Faith; this cannot be done till *Antichrist* be first destroy'd, and *Satan* restrain'd from deceiving the Nations. Nor do any of the Texts which he produces, p. 280, to prove that the Kingdom of *Antichrist* will not be totally destroy'd till the End of the World, nor even all of them together, come up to the Point. This Supposition of his, therefore, is not only groundless, but contradictory to Scripture. Nothing hinders then from any thing that hitherto appears, but that the Seat of the *new Heavens* and *Earth* may be in this World—That it is not in his future one, is evident, tho' from no other Consideration, yet from the Absurdities he is driven into in explaining the Doctrine of *Gog and Magog*, and reconciling the Irruption of such a monstrous wicked Race into his blessed Abodes, whence he had before excluded all Kinds and Degrees of Evil, both moral and natural, all Enemies and Sinners whatsoever.

We may well suppose him in a great Streight when he would suffer such an Account of their Original to fall from his Pen, as, to say no worse, is very unsuitable to the Character

rafter of a Christian Philosopher, viz. 'That
'they were the Sons of the Earth generated
'from the Slime of the Ground, and the
'Heat of the Sun,' p. 313. But what Shifts
will not fanciful Men betake themselves to?
What Absurdities will not go down with
them, rather than quit their beloved Notions?

This may be thought sufficient to shew
how groundless Dr *Burnet's* Opinion is with
regard to the Seat of the *new Heavens* and
Earth. But for the Reader's farther Satisfac-
tion, I shall consider an Argument or two more
of his in Defence of it.

The first, and indeed the most weighty of
all that he advances, is that drawn from St
Peter's Account of the *new Heavens* and
Earth, compared with the Context 2. *Pet.*
iii. 13. *Nevertheless we, according to his Pro-*
mise, look for new Heavens and a new Earth,
wherein dwelleth Righteousness; which
Words refer to what goes before—*Looking*
for and hastning the Coming of the Day of
GOD, wherein the Heavens being on Fire,
shall be dissolved, and the Elements shall melt
with fervent Heat. This Description of the
World's Destruction by Fire, and its Renovation
afterwards, following an Account, v. 4, 5. of the
Destruction of the old World by Water; hence
he concludes, that as the one must necessarily
be understood in the literal Sense, so must the
other—That real and material Heavens are
meant in both Places alike—And therefore
that the State represented here by *new Hea-*
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362 *State of the New Heavens*

vens and Earth, is not to be till after the Conflagration, when he supposes the *Millennial State* is to commence.

Now in Answer hereto, I admit, (1) That the Words are to be understood in the *literal* Sense, tho' not to the Exclusion of the *Allegorical*. (2) That such a State will succeed the general Conflagration and the End of the World, as may fitly be represented by *new Heavens* and a *new Earth*, tho' I deny it to be the *Millennial State*. For (3) I still maintain that both this State and that of the *new Heavens* and *Earth*, in the Sense I am contending for, will be before the Conflagration and End of the World.

To explain myself—I apprehend that the Prophecy contained in this Chapter respects three great Periods, or Revolutions, and that it is to have three several Completions, before it will be fully and finally accomplished.

1. In the Destruction of the *Jews*, the Desolation of their City and Temple, and Dissolution of their State and Polity, on the one hand; and in the Establishment of a more excellent Dispensation, and the Renovation which should ensue in the moral World by the preaching of the Gospel, on the other; the Design of this Epistle being, as Dr *Hammond* on the Place observes, 'to confirm the persecuted afflicted Christians in their Expectation of that Deliverance, which they should now shortly meet with by the Destruction of their Persecutors.' And as it is not unusual in the
pro-

and New Earth explained. 363

prophetic Language to represent God's Judgments on his Enemies, by the tragical Expressions of *burning up the Earth*, and *dissolving the Heavens*, so this is particularly the Style in which the Destruction of *Jerusalem* is elsewhere described, *Mat. xxiv. Acts ii. 19, 20.* And accordingly this is the Sense in which Dr *Hammond* explains it.

2. This Prophecy is to have another Completion in the Judgment of the *great Whore*, or *Antichristian Church*, mention'd *Rev. xvii. 1.* and in the happy *Millennial State*, which is to follow, and the more happy one of *new Heavens and Earth*, which is to succeed that. The Seat and Nature of that State represented by St *John* under this Emblem, hath been in Part considered already, and shall be consider'd more fully hereafter. Now as St *Peter* agrees with him in using the same Terms, *The new Heavens and Earth*, it is natural to suppose, that he uses them in Reference to the same State: Except perhaps with this Difference; that as St *John* is the only one of the sacred Writers that distinguishes between the *Millennial State*, and the succeeding one of the *new Heavens*, &c. so probably St *Peter's new Heavens*, &c. include both.

With regard to the Propriety of this Description of the Destruction of *Antichrist*, it is to be observed, that this Judgment, according to the Predictions concerning it, is to be executed upon him by Fire. So *Dan. vii. 11. The Beast was slain, and his Body destroyed,*
and

364 *State of the New Heavens*

and given to the burning Flame, which agrees with the Account which we have of the Judgment of the *Whore*. Rev. xviii. 8. 9. *she shall be utterly burnt with Fire, for strong is the Lord that judgeth her—And the Kings of the Earth shall bewail her—when they shall see the Smoke of her Burning.* So of the Destruction of *Babylon*, whose Name was written on the Fore-head of the great *Whore*, GOD speaks thus, *Behold the Day of the Lord cometh, cruel and with fierce Wrath, to lay the Land desolate—For the Stars of Heaven, and the Constellations thereof, shall not give their Light: the Sun shall be darken'd in his going forth, and the Moon shall not cause her Light to shine—And I will shake the Heavens, and the Earth shall remove out of her Place,* Isa. xiii. 9, 10, 13*. But,

3. This Prophecy is not to have its final Accomplishment till the Consummation of all Things, which it seems principally to aim at; when the *Heavens* being actually on Fire, *shall be dissolved, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat, and the Earth also, and the Works that are therein, shall* (without a Figure) *be burnt up,* 2 Pet. iii. v. 10. 12. For this being the strongest and liveliest Description of the End of the World, which all Antiquity is agreed shall be by Fire, if it were interpreted allegorically, to the Exclusion of the literal Sense, it would be taking such a Free-

* See Dr Whitby's Preface to 2 Peter.

and New Earth explained. 365

Freedom with Scripture, as might be attended with bad Consequences.

But on the other hand, it does not from hence follow, that Dr *Burnet's Millennial State* is to succeed the general Conflagration, which is here admitted to be described.

1. Because the general Judgment is constantly throughout the Scriptures, joyn'd with the End of the World, and no intermediate State is any where supposed to interpose between them; and thus particularly in the Place before us, they are most intimately connected together, and consider'd as two contemporary Events, v. 7. where it is said, *that the Heavens and the Earth which are now, are kept in Store, being reserved unto Fire, against the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of ungodly Men.*

2. Tho' it is said, v. 13. *Nevertheless* (notwithstanding this total Dissolution of this present World) *we look for new Heavens and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness*, we are not hence necessarily obliged to conclude, that the *Millennial State* is not to take Place till after the Destruction of the World: For I take the Words, in their literal Sense, to be a Description, not of the *Millennium*, but of that State of Bliss, to which the Righteous in general shall be received after the general Resurrection, and the Sentence of Approbation pass'd upon them. And accordingly, not only the Saints and Martyrs, but *all* Christians are admonish'd, in Expectation hereof, *to be found of GOD in Peace, without*

366 *State of the New Heavens*

out Spot, and blameless, v. 14. And I am apt to think, tho' *the new Heavens and Earth* of *St John*, were primarily design'd as a Representation of the future flourishing State of the Church on Earth, yet that this is only *typical* of its triumphant State in Heaven: Those glorious and resplendent Characters, exceeding all Metaphor, being too bright strictly to suit any mere earthly State, tho' ever so perfect. And herein I have *Dr Burnet's* own Countenance; who intimates that some of the Characters of the *new Jerusalem* are incompatible with a terrestrial State, and some of them with a celestial one, p. 196.

As it is not unusual for Prophecies to have more Aspects than one, so this, as we have seen, has three; each of which is espoused by learned Men, each hath its Advantages, and each must be acknowledged to have its Difficulties, if the Prophecy be confined to it alone. But if it be extended to all three, agreeably to the Richness * of Scripture-Prophecy,

* *Non gravatè concedimus quædam—Scripturæ loca non incommode exponi de rebus tunc gestis, adeoque tunc temporis (puta in primo Christi Adventu, &c) adimpleta fuisse: At vel ex illis Promissis quædam etiam ulterius adimplenda fore, non uno Loco docet Scripturæ Proprietas. Testatissima Res est; scilicet, Scriptura vel Prophetia, non uno modo (uti nec uno tempore) impleri dicitur. Est enim quoddam Incrementum Sensûs: Impletio Vaticiniorum & Promissorum possit esse in fluxu & progressu. Est, ubi prima & inchoata Impletio est quasi Pignus & Arrha futuræ Impletionis. Præludium quoddam adimplentionis longè illustrioris & uberioris. Tunc Scriptura impleri aliquando dicitur, cum id ipsum quod per Prophetiam aut Scripturam dictum erat, quanvis jam factum fuerit, tamen magis ac magis fit; scilicet cum fit cumulativè; cum impletur secundum Sensum sublimiorem; quod firmari possit ex plurimis Scripturæ Testimoniis. Dissert. superius laudatæ, cl. Wortington, p. 147.*

and New Earth explained. 367

phesy, no Difficulties can be started, but what may be solved on one or other of the three *Hypotheses*: Nor do I see that they are any ways inconsistent with each other.

It is moreover observable, that suitably to the three Completions, there are likewise three parallel Prophecies of the same Import, and conceived in the very same general Terms: And if one of the Prophecies has three Views, we may suppose that the other two have each as many and the same: But I conceive, with this Difference—

The Evangelical Prophet *Isaiah*, whose Prophecies generally relate to the first Coming of our Saviour, by *his* new Heavens and Earth, seems to point chiefly to the first Ages of the Gospel; and therefore his Description is not so refined and exalted, as St *John's*. He rising higher, and writing about the beginning of the Age that *Isaiah* has principally in View, must be understood to prophesy chiefly of an Age distant from, and better than his own; and what Age can that be, but the last Age of the Church, which we elsewhere learn, shall in every respect far exceed all preceding Ages? St *Peter's* Prophecy including both these Periods, aims ultimately at one still higher, and soars above this World to one that is yet better. But that it is not to be understood solely of a heavenly State, exclusively of all Respect to this Earth, is sufficiently implied in the Words themselves. *Nevertheless, we, ACCORDING TO HIS PROMISE, look for*
new

368 *State of the New Heavens*

new Heavens, &c. Now, what *Promise* can this allude to, unless it be that in *Isaiah* lxxv. 17. *Behold, I create new Heavens, and a new Earth*, GOD having made none other *Promise* of this Nature, that we know of, when *St Peter* wrote this *Epistle*? Therefore the one is to be interpreted by the other; and that, That Passage of *Isaiah* is to be understood most naturally of an earthly State, and of a State on this Earth, will appear on the first View to any one that will but look into it.

But this, as I said, is only an inferior Sense of *St Peter's* Prophecy. As it expressly says, That *the Heavens* (i. e. the Region of the Air, or Atmosphere) *and the Earth which are now* shall be destroyed by Fire, it is probable, that the *new Heavens and Earth* shall be formed out of the Materials, and as it were, arise out of the Ashes of the *Old*; and being purged and purified by the Fire of the general Conflagration, shall again become the Residence of the righteous Part of its antient Inhabitants, after they shall have put on their Resurrection-Bodies. For as our Bodies themselves shall undoubtedly be refined at the Resurrection, so this our native Habitation, our Mother Earth, from whose Bowels they were taken, will then receive a proportionable Refinement, and be as fit for their Reception, as it was before. But this is offer'd only as a probable Conjecture, and as such no Stress is laid on it. I have yet a Remark or two to add on this Passage of *St Peter* before I leave it.

1. It

and New Earth explained. 369

1. It is said, v. 7. That *the Heavens and the Earth that are now—are kept in Store, reserved unto Fire, against the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of ungodly Men.* Whence it may be inferr'd, That as the ungodly are to be destroy'd by the same Fire with which the World shall be burnt, this implies that at the End of the World there will be ungodly Persons to be destroyed, contrary to the Supposition of an universal Prevalence of Righteousness. In answer to this let it be consider'd,

1. That the Perdition of ungodly Men is not meant particularly of any ungodly Men that shall then be found alive, but of all the ungodly in general, from the beginning of the World, who shall then be raised up; which is plain from its being join'd with the Day of Judgment, in which all are equally concern'd. There will, then, be ungodly Persons enow, and alas too many, for the last Fire to prey upon, without supposing any of them who shall then be found alive, to share in the same wretched Fate. But,

2. I think it is evident from another Passage of Scripture, that none of those who shall be found alive at the End of the World shall be Sufferers by the Fire which shall then destroy the ungodly. For St Paul tells us, 1 Thes. iv. 16, 17. That *at our Lord's Coming, the Dead in Christ shall rise first; then we, says he, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air; and so shall we*

370 *State of the New Heavens*

ever be with the Lord; which Expression, *we which are alive* (or more properly, *we the Living, the Quick*, ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες) as it runs in general Terms, without excluding *any*, must be understood to comprehend *all the Quick* at the End of the World: And as they shall all be caught up in the Clouds, together with the *Dead in Christ*, to *meet the Lord in the Air*; hence it appears, that both will be then joined together in their Fates and Fortunes, as well as Company—both shall be exalted to such a Region of the Air, as will be out of the Reach of the destroying Element, which seems to be one chief End of their being taken up thither—and both will *be ever with the Lord*; whence it plainly appears that there will be *no* ungodly Persons among the Quick at the End of the World.

But the rest of the dead (being then, as well as the Dead in Christ, invested with their own Bodies) shall be left to the Fury of the Flames, as an Earnest of the eternal Torments, to which they then shall speedily be consigned.

As to the Apostle's expressing himself in the first Person, *we the Quick*, that does not at all affect the present Question. As it was not for him *to know the Times and the Seasons*—As he was not sure but that the End of the World might happen before the then present Generation should be extinct; so it surely became him to speak of it, as what he expected,

to

and New Earth explained. 371

to make it the more interesting and affecting to that and all succeeding Generations.

Rem. 2. St Peter in the 9th v. of this 3d Ch. has these Words—*The Lord is not slack concerning his Promise—but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance.* Now as this is given as a Reason for the Lord's delaying his Coming to put an End to the World, and to sit in Judgment upon it, viz. that he defers this great Work in hopes of Mens Repentance; can we imagine that He would defer it thus long, unless He foresaw that all at length would be brought to Repentance, and that an universal Reformation would ensue? He either foresees that this will happen, or that it will not: If He foresees that it will not, why does He then wait and delay his Purposes in Expectation of what He knows will never come to pass? Observe what follows, v. 11, 12. *Seeing that all these Things shall be dissolved, what manner of Persons ought ye to be in all holy Conversation and Godliness, looking for and hasting unto, or (more agreeably to the Original) hastning on, the Coming of the Day of God?* But how is this possible? Where shall we run to meet the Lord? or how shall we quicken his Pace, and hasten his Coming? The Apostle indeed here tells us, that this may be done *by our holy Conversation and Godliness.* But how can this affect our Saviour's Coming, and the End of the World? Which way can it accelerate the one,

372 *State of the New Heavens*

or shorten the Period of the other's Duration? No otherwise than as it will contribute to that universal Repentance and Reformation, which it seems is to precede it.

This is another Argument in Favour of this Hypothesis which I know not how it can be evaded: And this, as well as the former Remark, shews, that Christ's last Coming will not be in *Wrath* to punish the Generation which shall then be found alive; but in *Mercy* to them, and to all according as their Works shall be. It will be actually terrible to many, and therefore it is often, and fitly represented as such, that Men may be excited to use their Diligence, *that they may be found without Spot and blameless*, so as to avoid the Terrors of it.

Hence likewise it appears that, as the Earth, according to what was observed above, will be refined by the general Conflagration, so the Refinement and Renovation of it seems to be the only End for which it will be subjected to the Conflagration; which therefore will be vouchsafed unto it as a Blessing*, and not inflicted as a Judgment or Curse for the Sins of

* Neque Promissioni huic (nempe quæ patet, Gen. viii. 21. Non maledicam ultra terræ propter hominem)—non promissioni huic adversatur comminatio illa, quæ extat apud Petrum, de Mundo hoc per Conflagrationem perdendo—Nam Conflagratio illa nec fiet maledicendo, nec propter hominem, quomodo factus est Interitus Mundi per Diluvium: sed propter Conversionem, Lustrationem, & Mutationem rerum omnium in melius, adeoque propter futuri seculi statum, in quo σκηνῶν, seu Figura huius Mundi non amplius locum habet.

Heidegger Hist. Patriarch. Exercit. 19. de Palingenesiâ Mund.

and New Earth explained. 373

of Men; which would likewise be contrary to God's Promise, Gen. viii. 21. *I will not again curse the Earth for Man's Sake.*

I shall only add, that these two Remarks furnish a full Answer to any Objections that may be drawn from the *Parable of the Tares* above-mention'd, p. 309. from *Luke* xviii. 8, or any other Places of Scripture, against the universal Prevalence of Holiness in the last Age of the World. On the contrary, I hope I have made my Promise good, p. 320. which was, to prove, 'That the last Generation of Men shall be *all* righteous, and that there shall not be a wicked Person among them.

It may be here expected, that some Notice should be taken of the xxiv. Chap. of *St Matthew*; which tho' primarily belonging to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, yet as it is generally allowed to be understood likewise of the End of the World, at least in a *typical* Sense; so there are several Circumstances in the Description of it, which may not seem reconcileable with the Doctrine here laid down: I shall therefore, bestow upon this Chapter a particular Examination, as far as concerns the present Subject.

In the 3d v. the Disciples ask, *Tell us when these Things* (the Destruction of the Temple) *shall be? and what shall be the Sign of thy Coming, and of the End of the World? Or the Conclusion of the Age,* the final Period of the *Jewish* State and Polity; as *Dr Hammond*

374 *State of the New Heavens*

translates and interprets it, suitably to his Sense of this whole Chapter, which he understands to relate to the Destruction of *Jerusalem* only.

In Confirmation of which it may not be amiss to observe, that the antient *Jews* reckoned two Ages, viz. *ὁ νῦν αἰών*, the Age in which they lived under their own Form of Worship and Government; and *ὁ μέλλων*, the Age of the *Messiah* which was to come; and as his Coming would of course put an End to the *Jewish* Age, therefore these two Questions are very properly joined together, *What shall be the Sign of thy coming, and of the Conclusion of this our Age?*

But admitting that the Disciples meant their Question of the End of the World likewise, thereby confounding two very distinct Things; yet as they were not *to know the Times and the Seasons*, it was not expedient for them to be otherwise inform'd: And therefore our Saviour gave them such an Answer, as fully satisfied the first Part of their Question, in which alone they were concerned; at the same Time leaving them at Liberty to understand it also of the End of the World: Tho' if they had carefully weighed his whole Discourse, they might have inferred from several parts of it, not only that the *End* was not to be yet, as he told them, but likewise that this Discourse of his had very little Relation to the Consummation of all Things; which we of After-ages have better Assurance of from our Saviour's own Words verified by the Event,

and New Earth explained. 375

v. 34. where he says with an Affeuration, *Verily, I say unto you, this Generation shall not pass till all these Things be fulfilled.* Whence we must necessarily conclude, that all the Events here predicted by him have been long ago fulfilled, in the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, which happened in the Life-time of some who were present, and heard the Prediction.

But was not the Destruction of *Jerusalem* typical of the End of the World? For the resolving of this Question, these several Things are to be considered. 1. The Calamities preceding, and the Terror and Tribulation attending this Destruction, contained in v. 6, 7, 8, 21. 2. The Awefulness and Solemnity of the Description, v. 30, 31. 3. The Suddenness and Unexpectedness of this Visitation, and the Security and Unpreparedness of Men for it, v. 27, 37, 38, 39. Lastly, the Distinctions represented to be made on that Occasion between different Sorts of Men; the *Elect* and *Reprobate*; *Believers* and *Unbelievers*; *Good* and *Bad*, v. 40, 41.

With regard to the first; the Calamities described in this Chapter, such as *Wars*, *Famines*, *Pestilences*, *Earthquakes*, are certainly very inconsistent with that peaceable, plentiful, and every way flourishing and happy State, which I suppose the World, in the last Ages of it, will be advanced to.

But as it does not appear from any other Part of Scripture, that any such Calamities as these

376 *State of the New Heavens*

these shall happen in the End of the World, but the contrary, as I have, and shall have shewn, so neither does it from hence: So far otherwise, That our Saviour expressly says, v. 21. That *then* (at the Destruction of *Jerusalem*) *shall be great Tribulation, such as was not since the Beginning of the World to this time, NO NOR EVER SHALL BE.* Can this *Tribulation* then be *typical* of any in time to come, when our Saviour asserts positively, that there never shall be any like it in all Futurity? It is of the Nature of a *Type* to be ever inferior to its *Antitype*—of the Shadow, to be more faint than the Substance; but this can have no *Antitype* to equal or come up to it; that is, indeed, no *Antitype* at all, as the Words in Effect tell us. There will undoubtedly be many such Circumstances of Terror attending the Conflagration of the World, and the last Judgment, as are not to be conceived by us; and of this, that figurative Description of the Destruction of the *Jewish* State and Government, represented v. 29. *by the Sun's being darkened, &c.* may be a proper *Emblem*; but this is very different from *Wars, Famines, &c.* and for the above Reasons, I cannot think that any such Calamities shall happen towards the End of the World, as Presages of its Destruction, or that they shall happen at all.

2. The awful and solemn Manner in which the Appearance of the *Son of Man* is described, is *figuratively* to be understood of his coming to the Destruction of the unbelieving *Jews,*

and New Earth explained. 377

Jews, and the Deliverance of his *Elect*; and *literally*, of his last coming to Judgment to reward the Good, and punish the Bad, and to deal with every one *according to his Works*: But this does not affect any thing I have offered. I therefore proceed,

3. To consider the Suddenness and Unexpectedness of *Christ's* Coming; and the Security and Unpreparedness of Men for it. *Christ's Coming*, which bears many different Senses in Scripture, may be quick and sudden to all; but it cannot surprize any, but those that are careless and secure, and unprepared for it. Such were the *Antediluvians*, the *Sodomites*, and the *Jews*, when our Saviour came to inflict Vengeance upon them: Such are many other wicked People, who are frequently visited with sudden Judgments: and such are many particular Persons, whom Death and Judgment overtake unawares: But that this will be the Case of the last Generation of Men, cannot be granted; because it hath been proved that they shall be all righteous, and therefore prepared and ready for their Change, and their Lord's Coming. And to such as these the Apostle addresseth himself. 1 Th. v. 2, 4. *Yourselves know perfectly, that the Day of the Lord so cometh as a Thief in the Night, but ye, Brethren, are not in Darknes, that that Day should overtake you as a Thief.* And consequently,

4thly, As they will be all righteous, there will be no Distinctions made between the last
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378 *State of the New Heavens*

Generation of Men, and each other; for they shall be *all caught up into the Air*, together with the *Dead in Christ*, and shall all *be ever with the Lord*. At the final Judgment indeed, which succeeds, Distinction will be made between the Just and Unjust in general; the Sheep and the Goats: But that does not regard the present Question, and is far from being questioned by me. Upon the whole I cannot find that the xxivth Chap. of *Matt.* furnisheth any Objection against what hath been advanced above.

To return to Dr *Burnet*.—There is one other Argument of this learned Author's in Defence of his Opinion concerning the Seat of the *new Heavens and Earth*, which I promised to consider; I mean that which he draws from that particular Character of them which St *John* gives us, *viz.* That therein *there was no Sea*; and which falls more immediately in my way here, as I propose for the Reader's Satisfaction to speak to the several Characters of the *new Jerusalem State*, as they occur in the xxist and xxiid Chap. of the *Revelations*. The first of which is this.—*And I saw a new Heaven and a new Earth, for the first Heaven and the first Earth were passed away, and there was no more Sea*, Ch. xxi. 1.

This Circumstance of there being *no Sea* in the new Heavens and Earth so exactly hits Dr *Burnet's* Hypothesis, that no Wonder he catches at it, and interprets it in the literal Sense,

and New Earth explained. 379.

Sense *. But others, who are not under the same Prejudices, tho' they should be at a loss how else to understand this Text, yet would hardly be persuaded to understand it in this Manner, for this very Reason, because of the Absurdity of this Sense of it; whereby it is made to support a World so unphilosophical, and uninhabitable. As well might he understand this whole Chapter in the literal Sense—Suppose the *New Jerusalem* to be actually built with *Gems* and *precious Stones*, and exclude *Sun* and *Moon* from his new Heaven and Earth, as exclude the *Sea* from it. And something like this he seems to do elsewhere p. 318. where (somewhat inconsistently with his main Scheme) he makes a second Transformation of the *new Jerusalem*, and brings it at last to a *fixt Star*. When he considers that the City had no need of the *Sun* or *Moon*, and that there was *no Night* there, he makes this grave Reflection and concludes, 'That this can be no terrestrial Body; it must be a Substance luminous in itself, and a Fountain of Light, as a fixt Star.'

To turn every Thing into Allegory is to explain away the Sense of Scripture; but too close and scrupulous an Adherence to the Letter does it no less Disservice, by making it appear absurd and ridiculous.

If we would come at the Sense of the bright Characters in this Chap. we must interpret them in a spiritual Manner. The glorious *Light* which

* Theory p. 195.

380 *State of the New Heavens*

which the *new Jerusalem* shall enjoy can be none other than the *Light of the Gospel*, the *glorious Gospel*, as *St Paul* more than once calls it, *2 Cor. iv. 4. 1 Tim. i. 11.* which will then shine forth in its full Lustre, dispelling all the dark Clouds of Ignorance and Error, and greatly enlightening the Understandings of Men. This Interpretation is the more probable, because *St John* in his other Writings constantly represents the Gospel and its Author under the Image of *Light*; and here likewise he says, *Ch. xxi. 23. That the City, i. e. the Church, had no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon to shine in it: For the Glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof—The Sun of Righteousness*, whose *Tabernacle* shall be then *with Men v. 3.* and of whom the Sun in the Firmament is but an Emblem. And is not this spiritual Light far more excellent than the natural Light of a *fixed Star*? And a more worthy and sublime Explication of this divine Portraiture? When *GOD* shall cast the bright Beams of his Light upon his Church, and it shall be fully illuminated with the Doctrine of *Christ* and his Apostles—When the Excellence of the Christian Dispensation shall thus be displayed, and its divine Precepts shine forth with double Lustre in the Lives of its Professors—*When the King's Daughter* shall by this Means be *all glorious within, and her Cloathing of wrought Gold, Ps. xlv. 14. i. e.* when the outward Decency and Majesty of *Christ's Church*,
the

and New Earth explained. 381

the *Lamb's Bride*, shall be suitable to her inward Excellence and Purity, *worshipping the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness* Pl. xxix. 2. When we consider I say, that the *holy City*, the *new Jerusalem*, shall descend from Heaven, prepared in this manner, as a *Bride adorned for her Husband*. v. 2. we shall not think it unsuitable to the figurative Style here used to represent her garnished with *Gold*, and *Gems*, and all manner of precious Stones, as the Emblems of these excellent Endowments and Privileges.

To resume the Argument—As the Description of the *holy Jerusalem* is in a manner entirely allegorical; so that of the NEW HEAVENS and NEW EARTH, which differs from it no otherwise than a Whole does from a Part, ought to be taken allegorically likewise. For by the *new Heavens and Earth* I understand the whole renovated World, natural as well as moral; as by the *holy City*, the *new Jerusalem*, I understand the Christian Church. And as the whole in a manner is to be interpreted figuratively, so that particular Character belonging to it, *that therein was no more Sea*, requires as much as any other to be interpreted figuratively likewise.

And what can it mean, but that this Element being the Emblem of Trouble, Disquiet and Inconstancy, by *there being no more Sea* is signified, That the renovated World shall not be subject to the Vicissitudes, Commotions, and Disorders, which in its present

382 *State of the New Heavens*

corrupt State are, more or less, unavoidable? That there shall be a greater Tranquillity, Stability, and Certainty in all Things here below, and that they shall flow on in a smoother, more regular, and uniform Course, than hitherto they have done? Then every Individual shall regulate his Conduct by the nicest Rules of Wisdom and Prudence, and shall know his own Sphere so well, as never to deviate from it to the Disturbance of another: Neither shall there be any Strife or Emulation between Particulars, but who shall contribute most to the Good of the Whole. The Politicks of all States shall then likewise be refined, and placed upon a more generous Footing, than to be employed in distressing and out-witting each other. They will then see it their Interest rather to promote their mutual Welfare, each seeking its own in the general Good. And agreeably hereto, the Course of Nature shall be proportionably altered for the better: The Seasons shall be regular and constant in their Return, the Air temperate, the Earth fruitful, and Nature in general restored to its primitive and paradisiacal State.

This is what I take to be obscurely hinted in this Expression, that in the new Heavens and Earth, *there shall be no more Sea.* And I find *Eftius* and *St Austin* likewise understand it in this manner. And what inclines me the more to think, that this is the true Sense of it is, because otherwise there would seem

and New Earth explained. 383

seem to be an Omission in St *John's* Description, with regard to the Peace, Tranquillity, and Stability of Enjoyment in his new Heavens and Earth, in which *Isaiah* is very express and particular. Ch. lxxv. 21, 22, 23.

That there is Foundation in Scripture, as well as in the Analogy of Nature, for interpreting the Sea as emblematical of Disquiet and Vicissitude, the Reader may be satisfied from *Isa. lxxv. 20.* where the Holy Ghost compares the Wicked to the *troubled Sea, which cannot rest, whose Waters cast up Mire and Dirt.* And from *James i. 6.* Where he that *wavereth* is said to be *like a Wave of the Sea, driven with the Wind and tossed.*

I have now only to consider the remaining Characters of the new *Jerusalem* State, which being for the most Part plainly and literally expressed, are less liable to mistake; and require less pains to fix the Meaning of them.

The first that occurs is in v. 3. *And I heard a great Voice out of Heaven, saying, Behold the Tabernacle of GOD is with Men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his People, and GOD himself shall be with them, and be their GOD.* Which Words imply that this State shall be blessed with the divine Presence in a peculiar manner. I have elsewhere mentioned the divine Presence as a Character of this State. p. 303. but have reserved the particular Consideration of it for this Place. What may be affirmed in general concerning it

384 *State of the New Heavens*

it is, That it must needs be of an extraordinary Nature, and very different from what is vouchsafed the Church at present. Christ indeed has promised to be with it always, throughout all Ages of it, *even unto the End of the World*: But we cannot say that he is hitherto any otherwise present with it, than in the common Methods of his Providence, and by the ordinary Influences of his Spirit preserving, conducting, and supporting it, that *the Gates of Hell prevail not against it*. But there seems to be something more implied in the Words above-mentioned, otherwise why are they inserted here as the peculiar Character of this State? And why are they introduced in so pompous and solemn a manner? *I heard a great Voice from Heaven, saying, &c.* But if we consider what follows. v. 11. That the *new Jerusalem* which descended out of Heaven had the *Glory of GOD*, and v. 22. that *St John saw no Temple therein*, but that the *Lord GOD Almighty, and the Lamb were the Temple of it*. and v. 23. *That the Glory of GOD did lighten it, and the Lamb was the Light thereof*. and Ch. xxii. v. 3, 4. *That the Throne of GOD and the Lamb was in it, and that his Servants saw his Face*. And that *Ezekiel* concludes his Description of this same *new Jerusalem* in these Words, *The Name of the City from that Day shall be, The Lord is there*. Ch. xlviii. ult. From all this we cannot avoid concluding, that the divine Presence will be with the Church in this happy State

and New Earth explained. 385

State of it in a most eminent and distinguishing manner, to all good purposes whatsoever.

It is thought by some that GOD Almighty revealed himself by a visible Appearance to *Adam* in Paradise ; however it is certain he did to several other holy Men of Old, not only upon particular Occasions, but moreover that he vouchsafed a standing Manifestation of his Glory to the *Jewish* Church for many Ages. And who can tell but he will again converse as freely and familiarly with Men, when the paradisiacal State shall be restored ? When his *Tabernacle* shall be once more *pitch'd among Men*, the divine *Shecinah* may again appear in it. For it is not improbable to suppose, that what has been vouchsafed to a less perfect Oeconomy, may be restored under a more perfect one. But whether the divine Presence will be any way visible, or no, its Influence will be as effectual to all Intents and Purposes, which is sufficient to satisfy our Enquiries concerning it.

Another distinguishing Character of this State we have in the next verse. *And GOD shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes ; and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more Pain : for the former Things are passed away. And he that sat upon the Throne said, Behold I make all Things new.* v. 5. Which Words are as plain and express as Words can be, that all the natural Evils of Life shall be removed,

384 *State of the New Heavens*

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386 *State of the New Heavens*

and that Man shall enjoy a State of Indolency or Freedom from Pain of all kinds,—that even Death it self shall be done away, and human Nature shall become immortal. But the particular Consideration of this Head I propose to reserve for another Chapter.

Agreeably hereto, and which this is no more than a necessary Consequence of, we are told v. 27. that all moral Evil likewise shall be entirely excluded from this State. *There shall in no wise enter into it any Thing that defileth, neither that worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lye, but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.* And as the new *Jerusalem* will be too holy for the Wicked of any Denomination to be admitted into it, so v. 8. we are told where they are to have their Portion—*The Fearful and Unbelieving, and the Abominable, and Murderers and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Idolaters, and all Lyars, shall have their Part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second Death.* Rev. xxi. 8.

The Manner wherein, and the Extent to which moral Evil shall be removed, I conceive to be this—That it will at length be worn away to that Degree, that the last Generation of Men shall have no more Sin of any kind, than will render the good Offices of their Redeemer necessary for the Pardon and Removal of it; all Remains of which will be so effectually overcome by the Aids of his Grace, that they shall in the Course of their Lives en-

and New Earth explained. 387

entirely recover their original Innoaence, and arrive at such a confirmed Habit of Virtue and Godlineſs as to be morally incapable of ſinning ; as this ſame Apoſtle elſewhere obſerves—*He that is born of GOD, i. e. thoroughly regenerated by his holy Spirit, cannot ſin.* 1 Jo. iii. 9. where he ſeems to allude to this confirmed State, this Obſervation being applicable only to ſuch as are thus finally *ſettled and rooted in the Love of GOD*, and Religion. Having thus ſucceſsfully finiſhed the Term of their Probation upon Earth, they ſhall at length be received into Glory, and tranſlated to a heavenly Immortality without taſting of Death.

But farther, to ſhew how exact a Reſemblance there is between the primitive and future paradifiacal State, or rather that this is but the ſame State reſtored, we have in the beginning of the next Chapter a Deſcription of the River and Tree of Life. v. 1. *He ſhewed me a pure River of Water of Life clear as Cryſtal, proceeding out of the Throne of GOD, and of the Lamb*, which plainly answers to the River that went out of Eden to water the Garden of Paradise. Gen. ii. 10. and v. 2. *In the miſt of the Street of it, which was encompassed on either Side by the River, there was the Tree of Life, which bare twelve manner of Fruits, and yielded her Fruit every Month : And the Leaves of the Tree were for the Healing of the Nations.*

388 *State of the New Heavens*

Thus I chuse, with Mr *Mede*, to render the Words, whereby they become more intelligible, as well as more suitable to the Description of the first Paradise, which is supposed to have been situated between the two Rivers, *Tygris* and *Euphrates*. However, the *Tree of Life in the Midst of the Street* manifestly corresponds with and alludes to, *the Tree of Life in the Midst of the Garden of Eden*.

But it is not so easy to unravel this Mystical Representation, so as to find out the true Sense couched under it, and fix what it particularly points at, in this happy State.

Thus much in general may be affirmed concerning it, that it is a lively Emblem of the Bounty and Sufficiency of that Provision, which GOD shall then make for his Church, of spiritual Blessings, as well as temporal good Things; which will be so inexpressibly great, as vastly to exceed our present Conceptions. *For Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the Heart of Man the Things which GOD hath prepared for them that love him.* 1 Cor. ii. 9.

By this *Tree of Life* some understand the *Tree of the Cross* to be meant; which, as it bears the greatest Analogy to the *Tree of Life* in the first Paradise, so, if taken emblematically to signify the Whole of Christianity, it likewise best answers the End and Design of it. For when the Christian Religion is grown up to its full Maturity of Strength and Power, so as to gain entire Possession of Men's
Hearts

and New Earth explained. 389

Hearts and Lives, it will recover to them all those great Blessings and Privileges, which the *Tree of Life* was designed to procure for them in Paradise, and of which it will secure to them the Enjoyment.

And particularly, the medicinal Virtue of the Leaves of the *Gospel-Tree of Life*, mentioned likewise *Ezek. xlvii. 12.* may signify the Means of Grace, the External of Religion, the constant Application of which will remedy all the lesser Infirmities of our Nature; to which, as I have shewn p. 15, *Adam* in Paradise might have been liable, consistently with his State of Innocence, and from which Creatures of superior Orders may not perhaps be entirely exempt.

The concluding Character of the *new Jerusalem* State is contained in the three next Verses. *And there shall be no more CURSE: But the Throne of GOD and of the Lamb shall be in it: and his Servants shall serve him. And they shall see his Face, and his Name shall be in their Foreheads. And there shall be no Night there, and they need no Candle, neither Light of the Sun; for the Lord GOD giveth them Light; and they shall reign for ever and ever.* Here is an express Declaration, that the Curse and ill Consequences of the Fall shall be entirely removed and done away. Indeed had the holy Ghost been silent, and left us to have made the Conclusion ourselves, we could not well have avoided

390 *State of the New Heavens*

it, after what he was pleased to reveal in this, and the foregoing Chapter ; where the several Parts of the Curse, natural and moral Evil, are said to be removed ; Man restored to his native Innocence, Integrity, Felicity, and Immortality ; And where we have as lively a Description of Paradise as in the second Chapter of *Genesis*.

But after recounting these Particulars, the Spirit, by Way of Confirmation, adds in general. *And there shall be no more CURSE ;* thereby, one would think, putting it beyond all Possibility of Doubt or Mistake. Hereto is subjoin'd v. 5. *and they shall reign for ever and ever*, thereby intimating that this State shall be of long Continuance on Earth, and be perpetuated by the Translation of it into Heaven ; when, the Mediatorial Scheme being completed, and the Redemption of our Nature fully accomplished, *all these Things shall be dissolved*, and our glorious Redeemer *shall deliver up the Kingdom to GOD, even the Father, of whose Kingdom there shall be no End.*

I would now fain know what is wanting to make this State truly and completely paradisiacal ; all the Characters of such a State being thus distinctly laid down, and in such plain and express Terms, as are not frequently to be met with in the propheticall Writings, especially in the *Revelations* of St John.

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and New Earth explained. 391

It is some Presumption in favour of this Opinion, that the beginning and ending of the sacred Code have a remarkable Reference to each other: It begins with *the Creation of the World, the planting of Paradise, the placing of Man in it, and his Loss of it*: It ends with *the Renovation of the World, the Restitution of Paradise, and the Restoration of Man to the Enjoyment of it, and particularly of the Tree of Life, to prevent his Eating of which he had been expelled out of it.*

The sacred Writings are not only consistent throughout, but they have moreover a wonderful Connection with, and Dependence upon each other, notwithstanding the several Parts of them were written at such long Intervals and Distances of Time, and by so many different Authors; than which there can be no better Proof of their Divinity. But this Connection is more especially remarkable in the Case before us, and is a Circumstance which deserves particularly to be regarded.

I should now have finished my Design, and should proceed to a Conclusion of this Treatise; but that I am sensible Men's Prejudices are so great against some Things advanced in it, tho' they have accumulated Evidences of Scripture to support them, that I doubt they will hardly be persuaded *to believe Moses and the Prophets*, or even Christ and his Apostles concerning them, whatever Deference

392 *State of the New Heavens*

they may have for their Authority in other respects.

The Points concerning which I differ so much from the received Notions, and wherein I most doubt of overcoming them, are the NATURAL EVILS of Life; which are so many and various in their kinds, so great and visible in their Effects, and withal so unavoidable, as the World at present is constituted, that it is no wonder Men should think them inseparable from this Life, as necessarily resulting from the Laws of our Being here. The Miseries of human Life have been always felt in so many Instances, or at least seen in so many Objects of them, that this has been the constant Topic of Men's Complaints in all Ages past, and therefore they conclude it will be no less so in all Ages to come. And however some may escape through Life without tasting much of the Evils of it; yet the Evil of Death, the greatest of any, is common to all, and none can find any Refuge from it.

It is an adventurous Undertaking to attack Notions grounded upon the Experience of all Men in all Ages: Nor should I be so rash as to engage them with any other Weapon than that wherein I trust, *The Sword of the Spirit*, Eph. vi. 17. The Warrant of Scripture in this behalf hath in some Measure been produced already; but as the Reader will expect more particular Proofs in support of so
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strange a Paradox, I have therefore reserved it till the last, and not to interrupt the Thread of the Discourse, shall bestow a distinct Consideration upon it, that the Reader may form the better Judgment of it, and reject or approve it, according as it shall appear to him to deserve.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIV.

Concerning the Removal of the natural Evils of Life in general, and in their several Kinds.

I Have proved at large in the foregoing Chapters, as well from the general Design of Christianity, as several particular Considerations, that the Gospel-dispensation was calculated for the Recovery of our Nature to its first Estate in its moral Capacity; and agreeably hereto I have produced many concurrent Passages of Scripture, all tending to prove, either directly, or by just Consequence, that Mankind actually shall recover from all their moral Disorders, and be once more restored to a State of sinless Perfection, even in this Life. Now this alone, were there no other, is a sufficient Argument to prove, that we shall recover from our natural Disorders likewise; since the Cure or Removal of moral Evil necessarily infers the Removal of natural Evil too. For such is the Connection between the moral and natural World, that they are inseparable in their Fates; and as they fell, (*See p. 42.*) so shall they rise together. Moral and natural Evil may be look'd upon as Cause and Effect; for it was moral Evil that gave Birth to

25

The Removal of natural Evil 395

to natural Evil, and introduced it into the World. Thus particularly it is said of Death, *That it entered into the World by Sin*, Rom. v. 12. And ever since, the one has borne Proportion to the other. Every Increase or Diminution of moral Evil causes an Increase or Diminution of natural Evil, as its necessary Effect and Consequence: They constantly rise and fall, ebb and flow together. Wherefore upon the total Cure of moral Evil, natural Evil, being a Kind of symptomatic Disorder, will presently vanish. The Cause being removed, the Effect will cease of course.

Besides, upon the Removal of moral Evil, the End and Reason of natural Evil will no longer subsist; it being design'd by way of Discipline and Correction for the other, of which there will then be no need: For Men having regained the Rectitude and Perfection of their Natures may be trusted with Happiness, which otherwise would be a worse Evil to them than any they at present feel from their Sins; which if they were to cause no Inconvenience to them here, they would soon conclude they neither deserved, nor should suffer any from them hereafter, but perhaps would think themselves entitled to Reward: And it need not be said how great an Encouragement this would be to continue in Sin.

These Arguments are conclusive with respect to all natural Evils whatsoever; but there are some of them so visibly and immediately the Result and Punishment of Sin, that
with

396 *Proofs of the Removal*

with regard to them they are Self-evident. Now, if we were only to reckon up those of this latter Sort, they would make a great Draw-back upon the Number of natural Evils, and considerably lessen their Catalogue, were those Sins abstained from, which are the immediate Causes of them. It were endless to recount all the Mischiefs that flow from the Indulgence of the irascible and concupiscible Passions: Excess and Intemperance of every Kind constantly carries its own Punishment along with it; neither is there any other Vice that is not attended with one Inconvenience or other in this Life; and nothing is more certain than that all the Evils we are obnoxious to here, are the genuine Offspring of Sin, and may be either immediately or remotely deduced from it; however some of them may seem to such as consider them less attentively, to be altogether independent of it.

It is true, Poverty, Sicknes, Death, and other ordinary Evils are common to the best with the worst of Men, and so are the more extraordinary ones likewise, such as Famine, Pestilence, and other publick Calamities, in which the Innocent are often involved with the Guilty; whence perhaps it may be concluded that they sometimes proceed from other Causes than that of Sin.

But as Men are not as yet advanced to such Perfection, but that the most upright of them have many Failings, and *offend in many Things*; and as the Afflictions of good Men are

are represented in Scripture as *Chastisements*, which imply Guilt; so no Argument to this Purpose can be drawn from the suffering Innocence of any mere Man that has ever yet lived, since none are really, but only comparatively Innocent: Nay not from that of our Saviour *Christ* himself; inasmuch as He likewise suffered for Sin, in his Life as well as Death, tho' not for any of his own.

There being therefore none of the natural Evils of Life, which are not either immediately or remotely the Effects of Sin, we must resume our first Conclusion, That when human Nature shall have made a complete Conquest over Sin, as I have proved it shall, all these lesser Enemies which annoy us under its Banner, shall be likewise vanquished.

But we are not obliged to depend altogether upon consequential Reasonings for the Proof of this Truth; since it will, upon Examination, appear to be founded upon the express Authority of Scripture, whether it be considered in general, or in its several Parts.

1. With regard to the Removal of natural Evil in general. We have an express Promise of a Redemption and Restitution of the whole natural Creation, Rom. viii. 19—23. *The earnest Expectation of the Creature waiteth for the Manifestation of the Sons of GOD.—(For the Creature was made subject to Vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same)—in Hope: Because*

398 *Proofs of the Removal*

Because the Creature itself also shall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption, into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God. For we know that the whole Creation groaneth and travaileth in Pain together until now: And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first Fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of our Body.

Grotius, as well as several others, understands this Passage of the whole visible Creation, concerning which he very justly observes, 'that as it was made for the Sake of Man, so it ought not to be reformed and reduced to a better State, but when Men shall be reformed themselves.* Nor ought it to be looked upon as any Objection against understanding the Creature here mentioned, of the inanimate Creation, that the Apostle attributes a Kind of Personality to it, this being a Figure which he, in common with other Writers, sacred as well as profane, frequently uses for the impressing of a greater Weight and *Emphasis* upon his Discourse.

Thus much being premised, it may not be amiss to attempt a Paraphrase of the whole Passage.

'The whole visible Creation, which was made for the Sake of Man, and which is
joined

* *Tota hæc Natura rerum aspectabilis hominum causâ condita — non debet reformari in Statum meliorem nisi cum homines reformabuntur. Grot. in locum.*

' joined with him in its Fate, having been
 ' made subject to the Curse of *Corruption*, v.
 ' 21. and *Vanity* (agreeably to the Preacher's
 ' Observation, *That all is Vanity*) but this
 ' not willingly, not like Man, having this
 ' Curse inflicted upon it for any voluntary
 ' Transgression of its own—but by reason of
 ' the Sin of him (*Adam*) who subjected it
 ' thereto—This whole Creation, I say, by a
 ' Kind of natural Instinct, whereby every
 ' Thing hath a Tendency to its own Recovery
 ' and Perfection, waiteth in earnest Expectati-
 ' on, for the Time when the Adoption of the
 ' Sons of Men, v. 23. shall be manifestly com-
 ' pleted by their Attainment of the Perfecti-
 ' on of their Natures, and by that Means be-
 ' coming the Sons of God in a higher and more
 ' proper Sense than that Appellation can at
 ' present belong to them in. See 1 Jo. iii. 2.
 ' And the rest of the Creation waiteth for this
 ' happy Event, in Hope that it too shall then
 ' be renovated, and thereby be delivered from
 ' the Bondage of Corruption under which it
 ' hath long groaned, and *even till now* sym-
 ' pathizeth and travaileth in Pain together
 ' with us; who tho' we have the first Fruits
 ' of the Spirit, whereby our Restoration may
 ' be presumed to be in greater Forwardness
 ' than that of the Rest of the Creation, yet
 ' we ourselves likewise groan within ourselves
 ' waiting for the Completion of this same A-
 ' doption, to wit, the Redemption or Restitu-
 ' tion

400 *Proofs of the Removal*

'tion of our bodily Part, and of the whole
' Body of Mankind.

It is observable that the antient *Jews* expected a Renovation of the natural World in the Age of the *Messiah*, whence probably the *Jewish* Converts, not seeing it immediately take Place, might begin to despair of it; and therefore the Apostle by way of Provision against any Scruples of this Kind, on the one hand tells them, that the *Creature groaneth*, &c. ἀχολ τῶ ὄντι, even till that present Time; notwithstanding the *Messiah's* Reign had commenced some time before, thereby intimating that this Renovation was not as yet to take place, nor to be effected all at once: And on the other hand, he greatly animates and raises their Hopes of it, when he tells them that the Creature is in *earnest Expectation* * of it: Whence it is most natural to conclude that as this Renovation was expected, so it is to be made in this Life.

If this Interpretation be allowed, it confirms the *Hypothesis* laid down Ch. iv. concerning the Removal of the Curse from off the Ground. For as it is here said, that the whole Creation groaneth, and travaileth in Pain together until *now*, i. e. till the Time when this Epistle was written; it is evident that the Curse was not then entirely removed; nor, as may be added, is it as yet, there not having been any such material Change since: And on the

* ἀποσπασμένη *attenta & sollicita Expectatio, facta arreſto capite.*

the other hand, here is a plain Promise, that it shall be removed hereafter. In Confirmation of which it may not be amiss to add some farther Testimonies from Scripture.

To this Purpose, it is observable that the Prophets speak much of a paradisiacal State, and of the great Plenty and Fertility of the Earth in time to come. Thus *Isaiah* says, that under the *Messiah's* Reign, *the Fruit of the Earth shall be excellent and comely*, Isa. iv. 2. And, that *the Lord will comfort the waste Places of Zion, and make her Wilderness like EDEN, and her Desert like the GARDEN OF THE LORD*, Ch. li. 3. Than which Words what can be plainer, or more express to the Purpose? Thus again does he describe the flourishing State of *Christ's* Kingdom, Ch. xxxv. 1, 7. *The Wilderness and solitary Place shall be glad, and the Desert shall rejoyce and blossom as the Rose. And the parched Ground shall become a Pool, and the thirsty Land Springs of Water.* And Ch. xlii. 18, 19. *I will open Rivers in high Places, and Fountains in the midst of the Vallies: I will make the Wilderness a Pool of Water, and the dry Land Springs of Water,—I will plant in the Wilderness the Cedar, the Shittah-Tree, the Myrrh-Tree, and the Oyl-Tree: I will set in the Desert the Fir-Tree, and the Pine, and the Box-Tree together.* And which is yet more remarkable, *instead of the THORN shall come up the Fir-Tree, and instead of the BRIAR shall come up the Myrtle-Tree; and*

402 *Concerning the Removal*

it shall be to the Lord for a NAME, for an EVERLASTING SIGN that shall not be cut off. Ch. iv. 13. The Increase of Thorns and Briars being the Effect of the Curse, this Prediction of their being overcome by the Growth of more useful Trees, is a plain Intimation of the Removal of the Curse in this Respect, especially it being added, *that this shall be to the Lord for a Name, i. e. will redound to his Glory—and for an everlasting Sign that shall not be cut off.* For a Sign of what can this be, but of the Restoration of the Earth to its paradisiacal State? Agreeably hereto we read, *Amos ix. 13. Behold the Days come, saith the Lord, that the Plow-man shall overtake the Reaper, and the Treader of Grapes him that soweth Seed; and the Mountains shall drop sweet Wine, and all the Hills shall melt.* So Joel iii. 18. *And it shall come to pass in that Day, that the Mountains shall drop down new Wine, and the Hills shall flow with Milk, and all the Rivers of Judah shall flow with Waters, and a Fountain shall come forth of the House of the Lord, and shall water the Valley of Shittim.* These Passages have undoubtedly a spiritual Meaning couched under the literal, but there is no Necessity of rejecting the Letter for the Sake of it, as both are very consistent with each other: And so the Commentators frequently understand them.

On these and the like Prophecies probably were founded the great Notions which the ancient Jews had of the universal Plenty and Fertility

Fertility of the Earth, under the Reign of the *Messiah*, at least this was the chiefest and most certain Foundation of them.

As there will in this happy State be great Plenty of the Fruits of the Earth, so there will be a proportionable Increase of Men to enjoy them, and Cattle likewise for the Service of Men, as is sufficiently intimated in the following Texts, *Isa.* lx. 22. *Jer.* xxx. 19. xxxi. 27. and *Ezek.* xxxvi. 11.

And when Man shall fully return to his Obedience to GOD, the Brute Creatures shall likewise return to theirs *, and become subject to Man the Lord of this lower World; of which those Animals that are already tamed and made serviceable to us, seem to be an Earnest. Thus *Hosea* ii. 18. *In that Day will I make a Covenant for them with the Beasts of the Field, and with the Fowls of Heavens, and with the creeping Things of the Ground.* And this is the literal Sense of the above-cited Prophecy of *Isaiah*, *The Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, &c.* and accordingly it is so understood by several Christian * as well as Jewish Interpreters.

As the Creatures in general shall recover their first Mildness, so we here learn that Beasts of Prey particularly shall cease to annoy Man, and to devour each other, but be

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* Τῇ γὰρ ἀνθρώπων παραβάντος καὶ αὐτὰ (scil. θηρία) συμπαρέβη-
 ῖπόνταν ἐν πάλιν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀναδείμῃ εἰς τὸ καλὰ φύσιν μηκέτι
 κακοποιῶν· κακεῖνα ἀποκαταστήσεται εἰς τὴν ἀρχὴν ἡμετέτηλα.
Theoph. Antioch. ad Antolycum. lib. 2. Vide etiam Calvinum in
locum.

404 *Concerning the Removal*

content with vegetable Food. *The Lion shall eat Straw like the Ox.*

Naturalists indeed have observed that the Stomachs of carnivorous Creatures seem to be formed for animal Food ; but this might not have been by any original Constitution of Nature, but at first contracted by Habit, and derived down through their successive Generations ; and therefore may be worn off again by Degrees ; and the original Form and Tone of their Stomachs be recovered.

Isaiah in his Repetition of the last cited Prophecy Ch. lxxv. 25. adds, *and Dust shall be the Serpent's Meat*, intimating thereby, that as the Serpent was pronounced *accursed above every Beast of the Field*, so that he shall continue under this Curse, when his Fellow-Brutes shall be delivered from it. At the same time his Inoffensiveness under his Sentence may hence likewise be inferred, in that he shall be content with this vile Food, and not offer to annoy Man or other Creature ; as is more expressly signified, Ch. xi. 8, 9. *The sucking Child shall play on the Hole of the Asp, and the weaned Child shall put his Hand on the Cockatrice Den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy Mountain.* Moreover,

It being said *Mark* i. 13. that our Saviour *was with the wild Beasts in the Wilderness*, his Continuance in Safety among them is an evident Proof that the first *Adam's* original Dominion over the Creatures was, in Virtue of his perfect Innocence and Sovereignty over the

the whole Creation, restored to the second *Adam*; infomuch that he awed the whole Tribe of savage Creatures into Obsequiousness and Submission to him. And I apprehend, that tho' *Daniel's* Deliverance out of the *Lion's* Den was truly miraculous, yet that his Innocence contributed not a little to appease their Rage and conciliate them to him: Which may be looked upon as an Earnest that when Man recovers his Innocence, and is in Peace with *GOD*, *He shall be in League with the Stones of the Field, and the Beasts of the Field shall be at Peace with him*, as we are assured, *Job. v. 23.*

As it appears from the foregoing Scriptures that there shall be a Renovation of the whole natural World, animate and inanimate; that the Ground shall be delivered from the Curse inflicted upon it, and recover its primæval Fertility; the Air of course become mild and temperate, the Seasons regular, and the whole Face of Nature paradisiacal; a considerable Class of the Evils we labour under must consequently be removed. I mean more immediately the ordinary Hardships of Life; Toil, Labour, and Drudgery in providing the Necessaries and Conveniences of it, together with the Inclemencies of Weather, Rigour of Seasons, and other Inconveniences resulting from the present State of Nature; which being originally owing to the Curse, must wear off along with it, as they and it have in a good

406 *Concerning the Removal*

Measure done already. For this Curse must originally be supposed to have extended to all Mankind, who were all concluded under it; and yet we see many at present exempted from it, who know nothing of Hardship or Want, but live in Ease, Affluence and Plenty, and feel little of any external Inconveniences, having Ways and Means to guard and shelter themselves from them: And the Labour of Life becomes in every Age easier to those that are actually engaged in it. (Concerning which see Chapter IV.)

And when Nature shall be entirely delivered from its Bondage, such will its Freedom, Bounty, and Sufficiency of all Things be, that the most laborious Employments of Life will be rather a Pleasure than Toil, neither shall Mankind know what Want, or Hardship of any Kind, means, *They shall not hunger, nor thirst, neither shall the Heat nor Sun smite them.* Isa. xlix. 10. But, *they shall come and sing in the Height of Zion, and shall flow together to the Goodness of the Lord, for Wheat, and for Wine, and for Oyl, for the Young of the Flock and of the Herd: And their Soul shall be as a watered Garden, and they shall not sorrow any more at all— And I will satiate the Soul of the Priest with Fatness, and my People shall be satisfied with my Goodness, saith the Lord,* Jer. xxxi. 12, 14. And, *for Brass I will bring Gold, and for Iron I will bring Silver, and for Wood Brass, and for Stones Iron,* Isa. lx. 17.

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As Mankind will then abound with Riches and Plenty of all the good Things of Life, so shall they have a more certain Enjoyment of them, and be free from that Precariousness of Tenure, against which the most cautious Possessor of them at present cannot sufficiently secure himself. *They shall build Houses and inhabit them, and plant Vineyards and eat the Fruit of them: They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat,* as it frequently happens at present, but *mine Elect shall long enjoy the Work of their Hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for Trouble.* Isa. lxxv. 21—23.

And as every one by this Means will have enough to satisfy all the reasonable Demands of Nature, so neither will any one's Desires be so immoderate as to covet more. The Boundaries of Right and Wrong will be better adjusted, Justice better regarded, and Property better distinguished, and a more just Value put upon it; whereby in a Manner all the Contentions that are in the World will be dropt and dye away. The Scripture-proofs of which have been given already, p. 323.

But the most considerable Class of Evils is still behind. Notwithstanding the Earth shall be thus fruitful, the Heavens favourable, the World all Love and Harmony without, and which is above all, the Mind serene and peaceable within,—tho' all these favourable Circumstances should conspire to make us happy,

408 *Concerning the Removal*

yet what signifies all this, while we carry these sickly crazy Bodies about us? What avail all the good Blessings of Heaven, without the greater Blessing of Health to enjoy them? Or what Stability can there be in the Enjoyment to a Creature of such a short, precarious Life as Man?

I grant, if this were really the Case, that a Man might be miserable even in Paradise. But as all the other Parts of Nature shall be improved, so shall these Bodies of ours, both with respect to Health and long Life, be improved likewise.

With regard to Health, the Scripture is sufficiently express, where it tells us, *That there shall be no SORROW, nor CRYING, neither shall there be any more PAIN; for the former Things are passed away, Rev. xxi. 4.* The former Things—*i. e.* the Pains, Infirmities, and Diseases, under which Nature laboured, before its Recovery to this hale healthy State, shall together with their several Causes, be removed. Agreeably hereto God promiseth the *Israelites*, who were a *Type* of his future true *Israel*, that in Case they would be obedient unto his Commands, *He would take Sickness away from the midst of them, Exod. xxiii. 25.* And *Isaiab* likewise prophesieth, *That the Inhabitant, of the new Jerusalem, shall not say, I am sick—But they that wait on the Lord shall renew their Strength: They shall mount up with Wings as Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they*

they shall walk and not faint, Isa. xxxiii. 24. xl. 31. Our Saviour, when on Earth, cured all manner of bodily Diseases with a Word's speaking, and empowered his Disciples to do the same; which possibly might have been an Earnest of the future Efficacy of his Gospel in this respect. For when once it hath gained full and universal Influence over Men's Lives, as it will then prove the most sovereign Remedy for all the Diseases of the Soul, so I doubt not but its salutary Virtue will be as efficacious with regard to the Health of the Body likewise *.

How much the prudential Practice of the single Virtue of Temperance in its several Parts, as well as Religion in general, contributes to the Health of the Body is so well known, and hath been so much insisted upon by Divines, that it is needless here to expatiate upon it. But the Testimony of one who professedly studied the Nature of the human Body, and the Means of promoting its Health, deserves especially to be regarded. 'The Love of God,' says he, (that is Religion) 'as it is the sovereign Remedy of all Miseries, so in particular it effectually prevents all the bodily Disorders the Passions introduce, by keeping the Passions themselves within due Bounds; and

* *Christus venit ut repareret Vires nostras, ac restituat, Statumque nostrum integrum servet—si verè & perfectè in nobis regnaret Christus, floreret haud dubio Virtus ejus in nobis, corpusque & animum vegetaret. Est vitiiis nostris imputandum quod Morbis, &c. sumus obnoxii, quia nos plenè a Christo possideri non patimur, nec ita profecimus in Novitate vitæ, ut omnem Vetustatem exuerimus.*

Calv. in Isaiah cap. lxxv. v. 20.

410 *Concerning the Removal*

‘and by the unspeakable Joy and perfect Calm, Serenity and Tranquillity it gives the Mind, becomes the most powerful of all the Means of Health and long Life *.’ And when natural means are made use of in Conjunction with and Subservience to Religion, it doth not seem improbable, that what with the Study of the noble and useful Science of Physic in its several Branches, the Improvement and skilful Application of the *Materia Medica*, and especially, proper, temperate, and abstemious Regimens, continued for some Generations, and all under the divine *Auspices*—It doth not, I say, seem improbable, that by these Means, the manifold Diseases, which human Nature labours under, may by Degrees be for the most part overcome, hereditary Distempers cured, and acquired ones prevented.

And when Nature shall co-operate herewith, the Air become mild and temperate, the Seasons regular and favourable, and the Juices of the Earth wholesome and salutary, Mankind may not know what Pains and Aches are. Thus, *the Voice of Joy and Health shall be in the Dwellings of the Righteous, for the right Hand of the Lord bringeth mighty Things to pass*, Pf. cxxviii. 15.

Under this Head, there is a particular Case proper to be taken notice of; I mean that of the Woman: The Sentence on whom is denounced in the following Words—*I will greatly multiply thy Sorrow and thy Concepti-*

* Dr Cheyne's Essay on Health and long Life, p. 171.

on, in Sorrow thou shalt bring forth Children. Gen. iii. 16. that is, as I understand the Words, *Thou shalt not only bring forth in Sorrow, but thy Sorrows shall be greatly enlarged*, as well in thy Delivery, as in the whole Course of thy Pregnancy; and thy Conceptions likewise shall be much more frequent than otherwise they would need to be—Thou shalt have many false Conceptions and Miscarriages. See p. 23.

Now, that this Sentence on the Woman shall in Process of Time be removed, there needs no other Testimony than that of the fore-cited Words, which tell us, *That there shall be no more SORROW, nor CRYING, nor PAIN*, which Expression being general surely includes the Removal of the Woman's Pain and Sorrow in Child-bearing, as well as all other kinds of it.

But I think we have moreover a particular Text to this Purpose, viz. 1 Tim. ii. 15 *Notwithstanding she shall be saved in Child-bearing, if they continue in Faith and Charity, and Holiness with Sobriety. i. e.*, Notwithstanding the Woman, being deceived by Satan, was first and chiefly in the Transgression. v. 14. and therefore the Punishment of great Sorrow in Child-bearing, was justly inflicted upon her; yet this Punishment shall by Degrees be moderated to her; the Conceptions of the Sex shall not be fruitless, nor attended with Sorrow, as they commonly are; and at length Child-bearing shall become perfectly safe and easy to them: But upon Condition

412 *Concerning the Removal*

dition that they grow and persevere in Faith, Charity, Holiness, Purity, Chastity, Sobriety, Modesty, and such like Virtues and Graces, which are the Ornaments of the Sex: For it is still upon our Attainments in moral and Christian Perfection, that the Removal of all our natural Infirmities and Disorders must depend.

Several Interpreters admit that a temporal Deliverance is here meant, and that the Change of the Number from Singular to Plural, was made to include the Sex in general; whereby they seem apprehensive that this is the most natural and obvious Sense of this Passage. But when they compare it with the present State of Nature, they find so little Agreement between them, that they are obliged either to reject it, and chuse some more forced Interpretation, or else to explain it away; whereas if they would take it in this View, all Difficulties would presently vanish, and it would stand clear of all Objections, which other Expositions of it are more or less liable to. Part of *Isaiab's* Character of the *new Jerusalem* State is, *They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth in Trouble: for they are the Seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their Offspring with them.* *Isaiab* lxxv. 23. which some understand in this Sense, viz. That in this blessed State, Women shall not be liable to Miscarriages, and shall be delivered without Pain.

It is the general Opinion, that the Sentence

tence denounced on the Woman did not extend to the Blessed Virgin; but that she was delivered of her holy Burthen without Pain, because it was conceived without Sin: Nor is it impossible that in the holy State we are speaking of, when all our Appetites shall be subdued and rectified, the Desire of the Sexes likewise towards each other shall be so refined and purified from all brutal and carnal Lust, that what with this, and the full Flow of Health and Spirits which they shall then enjoy, Women shall be freed from the Pains and Perils with which at present Child-birth is attended. Even now-a-days we see that strength of Nature alone goes a great Way to this End, which renders it very easy to some Women: Nay we are told that the *Flottentot* Women, feel little or no Pain in bringing forth. It is not therefore incredible but that the Sex in general may come as easily and successfully through it, when they shall have every Advantage of Nature on their Side, and when the Reasons are ceased for making Child-birth painful to them; I mean, when it will be no more a Punishment for Sin, nor will be needed as a Restraint from Lust. (*See page 65.*)

Indeed a late Author * insists that the Sorrow of Child-bearing is not inflicted as a Curse, *Gen. iii. 16.* I would willingly concur with him in giving it a softer Name, but that will

* Mr Taylor in his Supplement to his Treatise on original Sin. p. 48.

414 *Concerning the Removal*

will not at all alter the Nature of the Thing. For under what other Notion than that of a Curse or Punishment can it be conceived, when it was denounced against the Woman as a Criminal, tho' God, lest it should deter her too much, forbears to give it that Name.

Nor was it, considered as such, at all inconsistent with, nor intended to exclude the original Blessing, *Be fruitful and multiply*; neither could the Repetition of that Blessing to *Noah* be inconsistent with, nor exclude it, as this Author would have it: Because it was not a Curse of *Barenness* that was inflicted upon the Woman, (as it ought to be, to make it inconsistent with the Blessing, *Be fruitful and multiply*;) but of undergoing great Pain and Sorrow *in* the procreating and multiplying of her kind.

I heartily wish this Author could have proved to the Conviction of the Sex, that their original Sentence is entirely repealed; that is, that they undergo no Punishment in their Travel; which it will be very hard for him to do in Opposition to the Pangs they feel at that Hour. However, he is kind in attempting it, and in offering them some Consolation under it: And to concur with him in the same compassionate Design, I have pointed out some of the wise Ends of Providence in inflicting this Punishment upon them, and the good Uses which may be drawn from it. I have observed how it is alleviated and mitigated to many of the Sex, and have proved from
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the Word of GOD, that it shall be entirely removed from the Sex in general hereafter: And this is all the Comfort that I can administer to them, which however is attended with this Advantage, that it is solid and real; and therefore preferable to that which in Effect only mocks them, and affords them no Prospect of Relief.

People accustomed to a narrow Way of thinking will hardly be persuaded that the Length of Man's Life shall greatly exceed its present Extent, which has been the common Standard for above 3000 Years: Their own mistaken Observations on the fancied Feebleness and Degeneracy of these latter Generations perhaps incline them rather to imagine, that, if there be a Change of any kind, we are falling short of it, which seems quite inconsistent with this Notion of the Recovery of our primitive State: For *Adam's* Life, after he had lost Paradise, was extended to a very great length, and it is probable it had been still longer, had he continued in it. Therefore before Man can be restored to his first Condition in every respect; it may be urged that his Life must at least equal that of the *Antediluvians*, which may seem to be a Position too absurd to be maintained.

But if we lay aside our Prejudices, and enter a little into the Consideration of it, it will not perhaps appear so improbable as at first sight may be imagined.

For why is it not possible that what hath
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416 *Concerning the Removal*

been once, may be again? Man's Age, 'tis true, hath been pretty much at a stand for above these last 3000 Years: But for near 1000 Years before, it was constantly upon the Decline; and during the 1656 Years before that, its Period indeed was fixed, but it was such a one as exceeded the present, as *Twelve to One*.

Now is there any Absurdity in supposing, that since Man's Age hath alter'd so greatly, it may alter again? As the Standard of human Life was once unfixed and moved downwards to this the lowest Period of its Declension, may it not as easily be unsettled again, and moved upwards to its first Pitch, or even higher than that? 3000 Years indeed to us short-lived, short-sighted Creatures, is a long Term; and it is no wonder we conclude that what continues so long shall not undergo a Change at all. Present Appearances, especially if prolonged for a Time, give us a strange Prejudice in favour of their Continuance, tho' it be such as we have no Temptation to wish for. If the Weather hath been bad for a considerable Time, we in a manner despair of seeing it become fair again. And if the Sun be but under a Cloud, we hardly expect to see his Face again that Day.

But 3000 Years in God's Account are but as three Days, and may perhaps bear but small Proportion to the World's Duration. And does it follow, that because a variable Thing has

has been for sometime fixed, it will continue fixed always?

I mention it as fixed at present, tho' it is really far from being so. As there are infinite Numbers in every Age that fall short of the common Standard, so several exceed it. And some late Instances we have had of Persons who have lived above double the present Age of Man, and have equal'd and even exceeded that of the Patriarchal Age. *

Now, as Providence must have wise Ends in prolonging Men's Lives, tho' but in a few Instances, so much beyond the common Period, what other End can we think of, than to convince us by living Examples in our own Times, of the Credibility of the Scripture-Account of the Length of Men's Lives in the early Ages, on the one Hand; as well as of the future Possibility and Purpose of God to make them as long-lived in Time to come, on the other? For nobody, I suppose, will question his Power to effect it.

The various Distempers our Bodies are at
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* In our own Country, *Thomas Parr* lived above 152, *Henry Jenkins* 168 or 9, and *Margaret Patten* 137 Years.

In the *Bannat of Temeswar* in Hungary, *John Rovin*, aged 172, and his Wife 164, were both alive in the Year 1740, and in the 147th Year of their Marriage; had 2 Sons and 2 Daughters then living: The youngest Son who was 116, had 2 Great-Grandsons, the one 35, the other 33 Years old. *Peter Torton*, a Peasant of *Temeswar*, likewise died January 1724 aged 185; which exceeds the Age of *Isaac* five Years, of *Abraham* ten—falls short of *Terab's*, *Abraham's* Father, twenty Years—exceeds that of *Nabor*, *Abraham's* Grand-father, 37. See *Ld Bacon's* History of Life and Death, few of whose Instances of Longevity come up to these more modern Ones.

418 *Concerning the Removal*

present obnoxious to, notwithstanding all the Care we can take of them, greatly impair our Constitutions, shatter our Frame, and hasten its Decay.

The Inclemencies of Air and Weather, the Irregularity of the Seasons, and the different *Mediums* of hot and cold, wet and dry, which we pass through and often instantly exchange the one for the other, are likewise justly supposed to contribute largely to their Dissolution; as doth no less the Unwholesomeness of the Diet we take for their Nourishment and Support.

Now, if we were to exchange our present Constitutions, which at best are but weak and sickly, for such as should be quite firm, hale, and healthy, if we constantly were to breathe in a pure, mild, and temperate Air—were liable to none of those sudden Changes from one Extreme to another—were subject to no Injuries of Weather, nor other Violences from without, nor received any Nutriment inwardly, but what were perfectly agreeable to Nature, and contributed to its Health and Support; do not we think that all these favourable Circumstances concurring would make a very considerable Difference in the Length of Men's Lives? Nay, is it not probable that the human Fabrick would be able to abide the Impairs of 800 Years then, as well as 80 under all its present Disadvantages? Some very feeble and crazy Constitutions have, with a proper Care and Regimen, been

been spun out to a very great length; and Nature often by dint of its own Strength hath made surprizing Efforts towards Longevity; how much therefore might it have done in such Instances, with the Assistance which the Art of Medicine might have given it?

This brings to my Mind the Wish of a great Author which I cannot help subscribing to, 'That the nobler sort of Physicians might not employ their Time wholly in the Sordidness of Cures, neither be honoured for Necessity only; but become Co-adjutors and Instruments of the divine Omnipotence and Clemency in prolonging and renewing the Life of Man; and in helping Christians who pant after the Land of Promise, so to journey through this World's Wilderness, as to have their Shoes and Garments (these of their frail Bodies) little worn and impair'd.' * How much this great Genius thought Nature was capable of being assisted by Art in this respect appears not only from hence, but from the Treatise in general of which this is an Extract, and particularly from his Recipe's. If God could make the Shoes and Garments of the *Israelites*, capable of enduring a forty Years March in the Wilderness, why may he not confer on these Bodies of ours with which we are cloath'd, a Firmness and Durableness in Proportion as they are of a less perishing Nature? And is it not possible that thus much

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* Ld Bacon's History of Life and Death. And I think St Austin hath somewhere a Thought much to the same Purpose.

420 *Concerning the Removal*

is typified by this Circumstance relating to this typical People?

But it will be expected some positive Authority of Scripture should be produced for supposing that Men's Lives shall be thus prolonged; because without that, what hath been hitherto said will be look'd upon as no more than idle Conjecture.

Now with regard hereto it is well known, that *Length of Days* is in several Places of Scripture promised as the Reward of Religion, as the Reader may see in *Prov. iii. 16. Exod. xxiii. 26. Deut. iv. 40.—v. 16.—xi. 21.* in which last place God doth promise the Jews *to multiply their Days as the Days of Heaven upon Earth*, on Condition of observing his *Laws*.

Agreeably hereto *Isaiah* in his Description of the State he represents by *new Heavens and a new Earth*, Ch. *lxv. 20, 22.* has these remarkable Words—*There shall be no more thence an Infant of Days, nor an old Man that hath not filled his Days: For the Child shall die an hundred Years old; but the Sinner being an hundred Years old shall be accursed.* The plain Import of which Words is this—That such will be the Strength of Nature in this State, that there will be no Instances of Children dying in their Infancy, and that Men will then live to a great old Age, insomuch that a hundred Years will be reckoned to be but the Age of a Child; and thus

thus some of the *Jewish* Expositors understand them. And if so, the Age of Man must surely equal that of the *Antediluvians*.

As to the Supposition that there shall be Sinners in this State, contained in these Words, *The Sinner being an hundred Years old shall be accursed*—The Reader may remember what was observed above p. 353, That as *Isaiah's* Characters of this State are not so refined as *St John's*, so this particular Character may be understood as applicable only to the Beginning of it, before it shall be arrived at its full Perfection, when it shall have no Sinners in it according to *St John*, nor *Death*, as will presently be particularly shewn: And therefore *St John's* Description relates most properly to the last and most consummate Period of this State; which must always be remembered, like the preceding Ones, to be progressive till it arrives at its full Height.—To return to *Isaiah*, in v. 22. he adds, *They shall not build and another inhabit, they shall not plant, and another eat: For as the Days of a TREE* (The *LXXII* translate, *as the Days of the TREE OF LIFE*) *are the Days of my People, and mine Elect shall LONG enjoy the Work of their Hands.* These Words again very emphatically express the Longevity as well as Stability of Man's Life in this future State. There is especially great Propriety in the Comparison of it to a *Tree*, as the *Cedar* and *Oak* and several other Trees are

422 *Concerning the Removal*

known to be of very long Duration.* Then will that *Psalm* of *David's* be most pertinently sung and applied—*Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits; who forgiveth all thine Iniquities; who healeth all thy DISEASES; who satisfieth thy Mouth with good Things; so that thy Youth is RENEWED like the Eagle's.* Pf. ciii. 1, 2. &c.

There is a Sense in which these latter Generations in general have the Advantage of the Antients, and in which they may be said to out-live them, which yet I shall not much insist upon, *viz.* in that they live more in less Time. It is a common Observation that Children ripen and become Men sooner in these latter Ages than formerly they did; and how much soever they are supposed to degenerate from their Fore-fathers in other respects, yet that they surpass them in Acuteness and Quickness of Parts. These Suppositions indeed seem a little contradictory, but it does not concern me to reconcile them. The Fact is, that notwithstanding our Prejudices in other respects, we esteem so well of ourselves in this, that we think we are more knowing in every Science and Profession in Life, and more capable

* The curious may consult *Pliny's* natural History B. xvi, Ch. lxiv. concerning the long Life of some Trees; and *Bayle's* Dict. Art. *Abraham* and *Barcochebas* Rem. G. where he will find an Account of the long Duration of the Oak of *Mamre*, and of the Turpentine Tree of the same Place, if it be not one and the same Tree that is meant by both.

capable of Business, than our Ancestors, not far backwards, were at double our Age. And in Confirmation hereof, some Traces in Scripture may be observed, whereby it appears that the State of Child-hood continued much longer in the Infancy of the World than at present, and seem'd to bear Proportion to the greater Length of Men's Lives.* And the same is observed by heathen Authors.†

Now, tho' our great Fore-fathers counted more Years, and our more immediate Ancestors as many as we do; yet when these Draw-backs are made upon each, we may be said to out-live the latter, and not to fall so much short of the former, as in common Account we are reckon'd to do. For the Life of reasonable Creatures is not to be estimated by the Number of Days and Years, but by the Capacity of applying Reason, and the actual Use of it: Otherwise it is no more than an animal Life, till our reasoning Faculties begin to exert themselves.

If this Observation be just, we may be said, in one Sense, to be now beginning to recover

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* In the Story of *Abraham's* casting out *Hagar*, and her Son, *Ishmael* is represented as a helpless Child; and yet it is computed that he was eighteen Years old at that Time. *Gen. xxi.*

† Thus *Hesiod* in his Description of the second Age of the World.

Αλλ' ἔχατον μὲν παῖς ἔτεα παρὰ μήτερι καὶ νῦν
ἔτρεφετ' ἀπ' αὐτῶν μέγα βήπιος ὡς ἐνὶ οἴκῳ.

Erg. & Hem. Lib. i. v. 130.

A hundred Years the o'er-grown Boy home-fed,
Was by fond Mother a great Booby bred.

424 *Concerning the Removal*

the Longevity of the first Race of Men. Neither, after all, is it necessary that Men should come fully up to the *Antediluvian* Standard in the literal Sense, if they can attain the Perfection of their Natures in a shorter Compass of Years, when the Reason will cease for their longer Continuance on Earth: An Instance whereof we have in *Enoch*, concerning whom it is observed, that *being perfected in a short Time, he fulfilled a long Time*, Wisd. iv. 13. If therefore, the Reader doubts of the Recovery of Man's Longevity, He is at Liberty to think as He pleases, without Prejudice to the main Doctrine.

There is but one Character more wanting to complete Man's Restoration to his primitive State.

When GOD forbid *Adam* to eat of the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*, he added, *For in the Day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*. Whence it is inferred, that if *Adam* had not eaten of it, he had been immortal, and in GOD's due Time had been translated from an earthly, to an heavenly Paradise without tasting of Death.

Now, before Man can be restored to this his first Estate, He must be invested with this as well as all the other fore-mentioned Privileges—He must not only live long upon Earth, but must become immortal, and be translated immediately into Heaven, without passing thro' the Regions of Death. And accordingly
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I have observed above, p. 254, where I endeavour to state the true Notion of our Redemption, that in order to its being complete, it is necessary it should deliver us as from all other temporal Evils, so likewise from Death.*

But is not this that insatiable, all-devouring Monster, that inexorable Tyrant, who spareth none of the Sons of *Adam*? Is not Death a Debt which all must pay to Nature? Which the Captain of our Salvation was obliged to submit to? And can we hope to escape it? Is it possible for Man, who is so frail a Creature,—has the Seeds and Principles of Corruption in him—feels in himself so quick a Decay, that he seems to be dying daily, and hath

* This Truth the famous *Aspil* was aware of: He saw that our Saviour Christ could not properly be said to save us from our Sins, unless he likewise saved us from Death, the Wages and Punishment of them. But his Mistake was, that he did not pay a due Regard to the Conditions on which, and which alone, this Deliverance was to be wrought for us. These Conditions are, Faith and perfect Obedience, with the former of which only he contented himself, entirely overlooking the latter; and herein consisted the great Error on which his Argument is built, and which runs through his whole Book. And which renders it the less excuseable, He seems to be not insensible of the Fallaciousness and Deficiency of his Reasoning. For p. 52. He acknowledges, 'that as a mere Ransom doth in itself amount to no more
' than to restore us to the same Life we had before we were captive, so this Ransom by Christ would only have re-instated Man
' into that Law of Life *conditional*, in which *Adam* stood before
' the Fall,' i. e. of being immortal upon the Condition of performing the Terms of that Law, perfect Obedience. And to make his Title to eternal Life *absolute* which is what he contends for, He is forced to have Recourse to the Super-abundancy of Christ's Merits, which, contrary to the whole Tenor of Scripture, he says, purchased this for us over and above our Redemption.

426 *Concerning the Removal*

hath so many other Arguments of Mortality about him—Is it possible for him, you'll say, to escape this Law of his Nature, and to become immortal without tasting of Death?

Indeed if we argue from Experience and Observation, we can draw no other Conclusion than this, *That Dust he is, and to Dust he must return*, agreeably to the Sentence denounced against him. Neither can we from the Principles of Nature conclude any otherwise: Because all Bodies have the Seeds and Principles of Corruption in them; and as they consist of Parts are dissoluble, and therefore naturally mortal.

This was the Case of *Adam* at his Creation, as well as of all his Posterity: As his Body was formed out of the Dust of the Earth, it was in itself liable to return to Dust again; and had Nature been left to itself, must have returned to Dust, tho' no Sentence had been passed to that purpose. For Immortality was not his Portion any otherwise than as it was intentionally conferred upon him by GOD.

On the other Hand, it may be said, that tho' *Adam* was not naturally immortal, yet it hence appears that he was capable * of being made so; and that he actually would have become

* *Theophilus of Antioch* expresses this matter thus—
 Μίσο· ὁ ἀνθρώπος ἐγγόνει, ἔτι θνητὸς ὁλοσχερῶς, ὅτι ἀθάνα-
 τος τὸ ἐσθλόν, δεικνὸς δὲ ἡσυχίας.

Ad Autolycum Lib. ii.

become immortal, had He performed the Condition of it.*

For, as the Author of the Book of Wisdom justly and finely states the Case, GOD made not Death, neither hath He Pleasure in the Destruction of the Living. For he created all Things that they might have their Being; and the Generations of the World were healthful; and there is no Poison of Destruction in them; nor the Kingdom of Death upon Earth. For Righteousness is immortal—Again, GOD created Man to be immortal, and made him to be an Image of his own Eternity. Nevertheless, through Envy of the Devil came Death into the World: And they that do hold of his side do find it. *Wisd. i. 13, 14, 15,—ii. 23, 24.*

There is, therefore, no Contradiction in the Supposition, no Impossibility in the Thing, nor natural Incapacity in the Subject, but that GOD, if he pleases, may give a Man Exemption from Death, and invest him with Immortality, without passing through any intermediate State.

And to convince us of this Truth, as well as of his Intention to restore to Man this Privilege of an uninterrupted Immortality, GOD
Al-

* Thus Grotius—Hebræi (dicunt)—*Abſq; Peccato non eſt Mors; non quod Deo jus non ſit eam aliter homini infligere (eſt enim Dominus Creaturæ) ſed quod ipſius Bonitati aliter viſum fuerit*—Non negamus hominem, cum conditus eſt, fuiſſe *χοιρίον* (terrenum)—ac proinde eam fuiſſe Corporis Conditionem, ut Deo non ſuſtinente interitura fuerit; attamen ex divino Decreto non fuiſſe eum moriturum, ſi in Innocentiâ perſtitiſſet, contendimus. *De ſatisfactione &c. cap. i.*

428 *Concerning the Removal*

Almighty hath vouchsafed us two Instances, the one in the old World, the other in the new, I mean *Enoch* and *Elijah*, whom he translated immediately to Heaven without tasting of Death.

GOD never capriciously alters his Conduct, nor departs from the stated Laws of Nature, without special and weighty Reasons. And among other Reasons for this extraordinary Exemption of these two Persons from the common Fate of Mankind, this may be one, that they were designed as an Earnest of the Privilege to be vouchsafed to the last Generation of Men, of being assumed and translated in like Manner. Probably our Saviour's Ascension might hereby be likewise typified; but I am apt to think if this had been the only, or the chief Antitype designed by these Events, it had been prefigured in another manner, viz. by the Assumption of some Persons, whose Bodies had been raised from the Dead, which had been more apposite, than that of living Persons who had never died.

But farther, with regard to the Credibility of this Supposition, the Resurrection of the Dead is confessedly a fundamental Article of our Faith: And yet I imagine one would find it difficult to assign a Reason in Nature * why Death, i. e. a Deprivation of Life should

* *Plato* indeed, in his *Phædo*, puts an Argument into the Mouth of *Socrates*, whereby he would endeavour to prove, that Life and Death are naturally productive of each other. But it is built upon a Supposition directly opposite to all the known

should be a necessary Qualification for Immortality: Or why a living Person, or rather a living Body (which only is immediately concerned in the present Question)—I say, why a *living Body* is not as capable of being made immortal, as a *dead* one. There is some Analogy, some Relation, between this Life and the next; the Life temporal, and Life eternal; they are both *Species* of the same *Genus*, as the *Logicians* term it: But Death is the Opposite to both.

And if we make no Difficulty in believing, that we shall be raised from the Dead to a Life immortal, we cannot think it a *strange* Supposition, any otherwise strange, than as it may appear new, that we should be made immortal without dying. For surely the Transition seems at least as easy and natural from *Life* to *Life*, as from *Death* to *Life*. Therefore since St Paul asked, *Why it should be thought a Thing incredible, that God should raise the Dead?* may we not likewise presume to ask, *Why it should be thought incredible that God should make Men immortal without dying?* The Resurrection, when it was first preached, was believed with Difficulty; and so are all new Doctrines, tho' ever so true, till Time hath made them familiar.

But it may be objected to this Doctrine, that it is contrary to St Paul, who says, *that*
Flesh

Properties of Nature, viz. That Contraries produce their Contraries, and the Instances by which he chuses to illustrate it are wide of the Purpose, nor had he been led into this way of thinking, but by his favorite Notion of a *Revolution of Souls*.

430 *Concerning the Removal*

Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, neither doth Corruption inherit Incorruption, 1 Cor. xv. 20.

In answer to which it may be sufficient to reply—That *that Flesh and Blood*, that corruptible Body which is laid in the Grave, is not fitter *to inherit the Kingdom of God*, and to put on Incorruption, than that which is supposed to be exempted from it—That therefore it is expressly said in the next Verse, that both the one and the other must undergo a Change for that Purpose; for *tho' we shall not all sleep, we shall all be changed*—and that this Change is to be effected *in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye, at the last Trump*; whence it appears that as this Change is to be a single instantaneous Act of the divine Power, and that not to be exerted till the End of the World, *at the last Trump*; those who shall then be found alive will be as proper Objects of it, as those who will have lain in their Graves ever so long.

I grant indeed that those *who die in the Lord* may in their intermediate State be in some sort qualified and pre-disposed for their Change; as by the Death of the Body, its carnal Lusts are likewise mortified and destroyed, by which Means it is better fitted to be raised a *spiritual Body*: And the Soul at the same time is by its Separation, weaned and purified from bodily Affections; and both are the better disposed for a happy and glorious Re-union. In this Sense, *viz. in a moral*

ral one, I deny not but Death may be a Qualification for a happy Immortality, tho' physically speaking, it cannot; that is, Death, or a Deprivation of Life, hath as such no natural Tendency to a Re-viviscence, but the contrary as hath been already observed.

On the other hand, as those who *die* in the Lord will thereby be thus qualified, for their Change; so the last Generation of Men who shall *live* in the Lord, will enjoy no less advantageous a Privilege: For as their Natures in general will be greatly purified and exalted, so their Bodies particularly will be so rarified and refined as to approach in some Degree the Nature of Spirit; whereby their *natural*, or material Body will be better disposed for its Transmutation to a *spiritual* glorified Body: For that material Substances may be transformed into spiritual, is not only agreeable to Scripture, but Philosophy likewise*.

In a Word, the present Cause and Necessity of Death will then be entirely removed. The Cause of Death the Scripture tells us is *Sin*. Thus *Rom. v. 12.* it is said, that *Death entered into the World by Sin*, and that *Death hath hitherto passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned*, and *Ch. vi. 23.* that *Death is the Wages of Sin*, and *1 Cor. xv. 56.* that *Sin is the Sting of Death*.

Now as it hath been shewn, that when our Nature shall be arrived at its Perfection, there shall

* See *Cheyne's Phil. Principles of Religion*, Part 2. p. 119. where the Manner how a material Substance may become a spiritual one is demonstrated.

432 *Concerning the Removal*

shall be *no Sin*, consequently there can be no *Death*; for the Cause being removed, the Effect must cease of course.

It is said indeed, 1 Cor. xv. 22. that *in Adam all die*; and that *Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the Similitude of Adam's Transgression*, Rom. v. 14. and *Heb. ix. 27. that it is appointed unto Men once to die*; whence it may be argued that it is appointed to (all) Men, all the Descendants of *Adam* to die, even tho' we should suppose them free from all Sin, both his and their own.

Now with regard to the last Text it is not said, *it is appointed to (all) Men*, but, *to Men* (the Generality of them) *to die*. And as to *Rom. v. 14.* it may be sufficient to observe, that tho' those whom *Death reigned over from Adam to Moses* did not *sin after the Similitude of Adam's Transgression*, i. e. did not sin in that presumptuous Manner he did, against a known reveal'd Law; yet sin they *did* notwithstanding against the Law of their Minds, and therefore they justly received the *Wages of Sin*: Or supposing they had not been guilty of actual Sin at all, which was the Case of Infants, yet their Obnoxiousness to Death might proceed from the Corruption of their Nature only, the Effect of *Adam's Sin*, which was not then, nor is yet done away; tho' it does not hence follow but that it may be done away hereafter.

As to the first Text, *In Adam all die*—
These

These Words may be understood two Ways,

1. That all have the Principles of Death derived to them from *Adam*; which tho' it be allowed, yet it still may be denyed that all shall *actually* die; because we have good Grounds to believe that the last Generation shall so entirely overcome these Principles, the original and actual Corruption of their Nature, in this Life, that *Death shall have no Dominion over them*: For as they will have no Principles of Corruption, they will have no Principles of Death in them; and it will not be consistent with the divine Justice to continue the Punishment, when the Cause of it is ceased. Or

2. The Words, *In Adam all die*, may be understood thus—Not that all that descend from *Adam* shall die in him; for that is not true, as will be shewn presently—But that all that *do die, die in him*. This is not my Interpretation, but St *Austin's*. Accordingly the following Words, which make the *Antithesis* to them, are understood with a like Restriction; *Even so in Christ shall all be made alive*, i. e. all that are made alive, all the Faithful, are made alive in him, i. e. are in Virtue of his Merits either raised, or translated to a Life immortal.

But however the Words are to be understood, it is necessary they should be understood with some Restriction; it not being true that all Men without Exception actually die. For two Men, as we have seen, have been already exempted from Death; and the

434 *Concerning the Removal*

Scripture says exprefsly, or in Words to the fame Effect, *That we ſhall not all die.* Behold, ſays St Paul, *I ſhew you a Myſtery: WE SHALL NOT ALL SLEEP, but we ſhall all be changed in a Moment, at the Twinkling of an Eye at the laſt Trump; 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.* Where we ſee that thoſe which ſhall be found alive at the laſt Day ſhall have their Change inſtantly without Dying: *Their Mortal ſhall put on Immortality, in a Moment, at the Twinkling of an Eye.* This is no leſs plainly expreſſed elſewhere, *1 Theſ. iv. 15, 16, 17.* For this we ſay unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the Coming of the Lord, ſhall not prevent them which are aſleep. For the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-angel, and with the Trump of GOD: *And the Dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt: Then we which ARE ALIVE and remain, ſhall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air. And ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord.*

Theſe Words are plain and need no Comment; and they confirm the Account given above of the *new Jeruſalem State*, one of the chief Characters of which is, that in it there ſhould be no more *Death*, *Rev. xxi. 4.* And accordingly at the Cloſe of the Chapter before, it is ſaid that *Death and Hell were caſt into the Lake of Fire*, i. e. before the Commencement of this State. Theſe ſeveral Paſſages eſtabliſh the Fact beyond all Contradiction,

dition, that the last Generation shall be exempted from Death.

Nor do I know what can be objected here, unless it be said, in order to lessen the Importance of it, that this Privilege is merely accidental, and proceeds only from the Circumstance of Time in which these Persons happen to live, and not from any extraordinary moral Qualifications in the Persons themselves.

In answer to which it might be sufficient to say, That this is a mere Presumption, not only unsupported by either Scripture or Reason, but contrary to both. For it is most agreeable to the divine Attributes to suppose, that he who doth every thing *by Weight and Measure*, who respecteth not the Persons of Men, and bestoweth not the least of his Favours casually and at Random, will not confer so great a One but on such as shall be proper Objects of it. Accordingly with regard to Scripture, it hath been observed already, p. 370, from the fore-cited Passage 1 *Thes.* iv. 15, &c. that *all the Quick* who shall be found on the Earth at the last Day, shall be joined in their Fates and Fortunes, as well as Company, with the *Dead in Christ*, and consequently shall all be in the Number of the Righteous. Indeed it is not said expressly that they shall be *more* righteous than their Predecessors; but it is implied, because there will be no Unrighteousness among them. But what will you say if it be proved from the express Words of Scripture, that this

436 *Concerning the Removal*

Privilege of Immortality shall be conferred as the Reward of perfect Obedience?

St *John*, the beloved Disciple, was admitted to a greater Intimacy with his Lord, and had a deeper Insight vouchsafed him into the Secrets of his Kingdom, than the Rest of his Apostles. He was himself made an *Emblem* or *Type* of this future Privilege of the Church, for which I am contending. For as our Lord's *Coming* to the Destruction of *Jerusalem* was an *Emblem* of his final *Coming* to Judgment, so I take his Appointment of *John*, Ch. xxi. 22. to tarry till this first *Coming* of his, to be an *Emblem*, that some of his beloved Disciples should survive, and be Witnesses of his *last Coming* to the Destruction of all his Enemies at the End of the World; else why should He express himself in such ambiguous Terms, as to give Occasion to the spreading of that Report among the Brethren, *That that Disciple should not die*? This however is certain, that if we examine his Writings, we shall find, that he talks more of our *Life* in Christ, and of his being the Author of *Life* to us, than any other of the inspired Writers. But with regard to the Question before us, I shall single out a Passage or two, which, I think, prove that Exemption from Death shall be conferred as the Reward of perfect Obedience.

Our Saviour in his Reply to *Martha*, Jo. xi. 25, 26, expresses himself thus—*I am the Resurrection and the Life—He that believeth*
in

in me, tho' he were Dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall NEVER die. Where he distinguishes his Disciples into two Classes—into those that *believe in him*, and those that *live and believe in him*. By the former I understand such as have a true Faith in him, but who through the Infirmary of their Nature, cannot live up to that Faith; with regard to whom he styles himself the *Resurrection*, and promises, that *tho' they die* (a temporal Death) *yet they shall live* (shall be raised to an eternal Life)—By the latter are meant those whose Lives are strictly and perfectly conform to their Faith: These, and these only properly *live* as well as *believe* in him; and with respect to these it is that he styles himself, *the Life*, and promises that they *shall never die*.

The Words in the Original are very remarkable—*ὁ μὴ ἀποθάνει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*—Which do not mean as some render them, *he shall not die for ever*, intimating that tho' he dies a Death temporal, he shall escape an eternal one, which is no more than a Repetition of what was said before in other Words—But the true Rendering is, *He shall never die*, as it is in our Translation—Or *ὁ μὴ ἀποθάνει ἔτι*. he shall in *no wise die* to all Eternity—He shall neither die a temporal, nor eternal Death; which Interpretation best answers the Force of the two Negatives, which were not inserted for nothing; and it likewise conveys the Promise of a superior Reward to him that both

438 *Concerning the Removal*

liveth and believeth in Christ, as indeed it ought. The several Parts of this Passage, in this View of it, are distinct and clear, hang well together, and rise by a just Gradation above each other. Whereas otherwise it is not easy to apprehend its Consistency either with itself, or indeed with Truth: For which Reason, Mr *Locke*, not being aware of the just Import of the Passage, makes it a Question, 'Whether this saying of our Saviour's can with Truth be translated, *He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die.*' *

Hence we may be enabled better to apprehend the Meaning of another Passage of our Saviour's—*Your Fathers did eat Manna in the Wilderness, and are dead. This is the Bread that cometh down from Heaven, that a Man may eat thereof, and not die.* Jo. vi. 49, 50. To understand the former Member of this Sentence of a *temporal*, and the latter, of *eternal* Death, as they are generally understood, is not doing Justice to our Saviour's Reasoning, and makes it conclude nothing. For we believe that the Fathers under the Law escaped eternal Death, as well as all good Christians. But if we say that by spiritually *manducating* Christ, *the Bread of Life*, so as to be vitally and perfectly united unto and incorporated with him, we shall become exempt even from that temporal Death, which the Fathers underwent—This preserves a just *Antithesis* between

* Reasonableness of Christianity. p. 104.

tween both Terms of the Opposition, by understanding them in the same Sense, and furnishes an eminent Proof of the Excellence of the one *Manna* above the other.

To proceed,—Our Saviour arguing with the *Jews*, tells them with an Asslevation, *Verily, verily, if a Man keep my SAYING, He shall never SEE Death. Then said the Jews unto him, now we know that thou hast a Devil, Abraham is dead, and the Prophets; and thou sayest, if a Man keep my SAYING, He shall never TASTE of Death.* Jo. viii. 51, 52. My saying—τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐμὸν—an emphatical Word, by which the second Person in the Blessed Trinity chuses to be entitled; but here it signifies the *Precepts* or Commands of this divine Person, with an Assurance of Exemption from Death to such as keep them as they ought.

But the Question is, what Death is here meant? It is indeed generally taken for granted, that eternal Death only is spoken of by our Saviour.

But the two Phrases here made Use of, not *seeing* Death, and not *tasting* of Death, if examined in their true Import, cannot with Justice be understood to relate to any thing but temporal Death. Because,

1. This is the natural Import of the Words, it being too light and soft an Expression concerning eternal Death, to call it *seeing* Death, or *tasting* Death; which Terms of Speech on the contrary imply the Death meant by them

440 *Concerning the Removal*

to be of a transient Nature. And accordingly our Saviour, whose Continuance in the State of the Dead was but for a very short time, is therefore with great Elegance and Propriety said, to have *tasted Death for every Man*. Heb. ii. 9. But surely it would be very improper to say of a Man that had died a natural Death, tho' he escaped an eternal One, that he had never *seen*, nor *tasted* Death.

2. Wherever these Phrases occur in Scripture they constantly signify temporal Death. Thus concerning seeing of Death it is said, Ps. lxxxix. 48. *What Man is he that liveth, that shall not SEE Death? Shall he deliver his Soul from the Hand of the Grave?* So likewise it was revealed unto Simeon by the Holy Ghost, *That he should not SEE Death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ*. Luke iii. 26. So again, Heb. xi. 5. *By Faith Enoch was translated, that he should not SEE Death*. — All which Places are necessarily understood of temporal Death.

In like manner with regard to the other parallel Phrase, *Tasting of Death*, it is said, Matt. xvi. 28. *Verily I say unto you there be some standing here, who shall not TASTE of Death until they see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom*; and the same Thing is expressed in the same manner, Mark ix. 1. Luke ix. 27. And as we have just now seen, Jesus is said *for the suffering of Death to be crowned with Glory and Honour, that he by the Grace*

Grace of GOD, should TASTE Death for every Man.

3. The Jews understood our Saviour to speak concerning temporal Death, as appears from their Answer, *Art thou greater than our Father Abraham which is dead? And the Prophets are dead: Whom makest thou thy self?* v. 53. For it is observable that the Jews believed, that when the *Messiah* should come, those of their Nation that received him should not die; but that they, with those who being dead, should then be raised again by him, should enjoy eternal Life with him. And in this Sense they understood Christ, when he said, that if a Man kept his saying, he should never see Death; and therefore they ask him, *Whom makest thou thy self?* Dost thou pretend to be the *Messiah*? Our Saviour does not charge them with any Mistake either of his Meaning, or in their own Expectations of this kind, as it may be presumed he would have done, and have set them right had they needed it: On the contrary, he both here, and in several other Places besides those we have already seen, confirms them in the Opinion, that he, as *Messiah*, would procure his Followers Exemption from Death.

These Considerations, I think, make it evident, that the Death which those that keep Christ's *Saying*, are promised Exemption from, is not eternal, but temporal Death, tho' this likewise implies the other; or rather an absolute

442 *Concerning the Removal*

late Freedom from Death in general, both temporal and eternal, is here stipulated.

But how, it will be ask'd, is this Promise or Covenant performed ? I answer, it will actually be performed upon the Performance of the Condition. It is not as yet strictly true of any Christian, that *he keeps Christ's Saying* i. e. that he pays universal and perfect Obedience to his Commands ; therefore the Performance of the Promise is not as yet to be expected : But when the Condition is made good, the Promise shall be made good likewise. And this was probably the Case with *Enoch* and *Elijah*, viz. That they were enabled in an extraordinary manner to overcome the Corruption of their Nature, so far as to be qualified for Immortality without tasting of Death. It is certain that the Translation of the one, and Assumption of the other, were the Rewards of superior Virtue. Thus the Scripture tells us expressly concerning the former—*By Faith Enoch was translated that he should not see Death, and was not found because God had translated him ; for before his Translation he had this Testimony, that he pleased God.* Heb. xi. 5. His great and intimate Conversation with God is denoted by the Phrase which *Moses* makes twice use of, importing thus much, viz. *His walking with God.* Gen. v. 22, 24. And the Author of the Book of *Wisdom* gives him this Character—Ch. iv. 10, 13, 14. That *he pleased God and was beloved of him, so that living among Sinners*

Sinners he was translated—He being made PERFECT in a short time, fulfilled a long time; for his Soul pleased the Lord, therefore hastened he to take him away from among the Wicked. And concerning Elijah, the Author of the first Book of Maccabees gives this Testimony of him—Elias for being zealous and fervent for the Law, was taken up into Heaven. 1 Macc. ii. 58.

That Exemption from Death temporal as well as eternal is the Reward of perfect Obedience, may be farther inferr'd from the Nature of the *Law of Moses*, compared with the first *Law* given to Man. For to use St Paul's Words, *Rom. x. 5. Moses describeth the Righteousness which is of the Law, that the Man which doth those Things shall live by them. Lev. xviii. 5.*

But it is certain that those who were under the *Law* died like other Men, and could not live by it; because they could not do the Things of the *Law*; could not perform an exact and perfect Obedience to it; which if they had been able to do, they should have lived, and have been exempted from Death, as *Elijah* was. For the *Law of Moses* was founded upon the first Covenant, of which it was a sort of Renewal or Re-publication: The Terms of both were the same, viz. perfect, unfinning Obedience; and their Sanctions were the same likewise, viz. Life and Death: These indeed do not appear from the *Law of Moses* to have been any other than temporal, but

444 *Concerning the Removal*

but from the first *Law* given to *Adam*, it is justly inferr'd, that his *Life* temporal had been exchanged for an eternal one, without tasting of *Death*, had he performed the Condition of it; and so consequently had the *Lives* of those who were under the *Law* of *Moses*, on Supposition of their paying a perfect Obedience to it.

For, as a great Author justly observes, 'Righteousness, or an exact Obedience, seems by the Scripture to have a Claim of Right to eternal Life. *Rom. iv. 4. To him that worketh, i. e. doth the Works of the Law, the Reward is not reckoned of Grace, but of DEBT. And Rev. xxii. 14. Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have RIGHT to the Tree of Life.* Therefore, as he farther observes, if any of the Posterity of *Adam* were just, they should not lose the Reward of it by being his mortal Issue—For Immortality and Bliss belong to the Righteous, and those who have lived in an exact Conformity to the Law of God, are out of the Reach of Death. *'

Hence therefore we may justly infer, that Exemption from *Death* temporal is the Reward of perfect Obedience, which was the Thing to be proved, tho' not the sole, nor greatest Reward of it. Here are two undeniable Instances of it, viz. In the *Law* first given to *Adam*, and in that given by *Moses*.

And

• Mr *Locke's* Reasonableness of Christianity, p. 14.

And when Mankind shall by Means of the second Covenant be enabled to keep the Terms of the first, they shall be made Partakers of the Rewards of it; they shall *live* by it. The Law of *Moses* will then no more seem to command Impossibilities; but what was *impossible with Men*, will appear to be *possible with God*: Then our Saviour's saying will be fully verified, That *He came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it*; in pursuance of which End, *the Righteousness of the Law will be fulfilled by us*; and then Law, and Gospel; first and second Covenant will co-incide: They will appear to be but different Parts of the same wise and great Oeconomy; the main End of both, one and the same; and that End will then be fully attain'd, *viz.* the Restitution of our Nature, and its Re-establishment in its primitive State. See p. 241. & 318.

When this is brought to pass, the full Import of that saying of our Saviour's will be clearly understood, *I came that they might have Life, and that they might have it more* ABUNDANTLY, Jo. x. 10. Then may he be said, *through his Death*, to have fully destroyed him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil; and to have completely delivered *) them who through Fear of Death were

* It is observable that the Greek Word ἀπαλλάξω, being a Compound from the simple Verb ἀλλάσσω to change, elegantly points out what kind of Deliverance from Death is here principally meant, *viz.* a Deliverance by way of Change, which is the most absolute and only proper Deliverance from it.

446 *Concerning the Removal*

were all their Life-time subject to Bondage; Heb. ii. 14, 15. And then he will have entirely ABOLISHED Death; and have brought Life and Immortality to full Light by the Gospel, 2 Tim. i. 10. This Truth, as it was heretofore under great Uncertainty and Obscurity, as to the Reality of it; so neither is it still but very darkly apprehended, as to the several Circumstances of it; for it doth not yet appear what we shall be, 1 Jo. iii. 2. And Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the Heart of Man, the Things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 1 Cor. ii. 9. Then we shall obtain the Adoption we now with groaning wait for, viz. *The Redemption of the Body*. Rom. viii. 23, from its present corrupt mortal State. Then the last surviving happy Generation of Men shall at Christ's Coming be found cloathed and not naked. 2 Cor. v. 3. i. e. shall be found alive in the Body, not divested of it by Death; and shall be cloathed upon with their House which is from Heaven, v. 2. i. e. Their Spiritual, heavenly Bodies shall be super-induced upon the natural and earthly: And of this (as the Apostle in the same Place observes) Nature itself seems to have some Instinct and Presage, even in this corrupt mortal State: For we, says he, that are in this Tabernacle, do groan, being burthened; not for that we would be uncloathed but cloathed upon. v. 4. i. e. Notwithstanding all the Pains and Pressures which our Bodies do now suffer, we are

are not willing to put them off, and part with them, however weary we may be of them; but our Desire is, if it might be, to have them *cloathed upon* with that glorious incorruptible Body, without suffering a Separation from them by Death.

And this Instinct or Desire implanted in us by Nature, which doth nothing in vain, is an Argument that this will be the Case of the last Generation, viz. That they shall not suffer a Separation of Soul and Body at all. That they shall not put off their terrestrial Body; but that the Celestial one, as hath been observed before, shall be super-induced upon it: For such a Body it seems, the glorified Saints are to have, into which their earthly Body will be as it were incorporated, and both make but one glorious Vehicle. And that this is the true Sense of this Passage most of the Commentators are agreed.

When Matters are brought to this Crisis, *then Mortality shall be swallowed up of Life*, as the Apostle here adds, v. 4. *And then cometh the End, when Christ shall deliver up his Mediatorial Kingdom to God, even the Father, having reigned, till He hath put all Enemies under his Feet: and Death the last of all: For the LAST Enemy that shall be destroy'd is Death.* 1 Cor. xv, 24, 25, 26. *This Corruptible shall then PUT ON Incorruption and this mortal shall PUT ON Immortality; and then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY.* v. 54.

Here

448 *Concerning the Removal*

Here our Researches are at a stand: Here we must *seal up the Vision and the Prophecy*, for here all Prophecy is at an End. *The Mystery of God is now finished.* Rev. x. 7. and the great Scheme of Man's Redemption is wound up and completed, as far as the wise Author of it has thought fit to reveal it to us.

By the Light of the sacred Oracles, which have all along been our Guide, and which is the only sure Guide in this Case, we have seen what the first happy State of Man was by his Creation—how he fell from that State—what the Consequences of his Fall were—and how he shall by Degrees recover from it, and be re-established in his original Condition: And the Reader, upon the whole, must be left to judge concerning the View in which these important Points are here placed.

The Revolutions which our Nature and the World about us have hitherto undergone, are pretty well agreed upon: These are Facts, which have been established upon the Credit of the sacred History, and confirm'd by the Experience of Men in all Ages. What is future is not so certain, for this very Reason, because it is *future*. Scripture indeed treats no less of this; but then as it necessarily treats of it in the Way of Prophecy, and as all Prophecy is dark, and more difficult to be understood before the Completion, so no wonder that those Prophecies which relate to the future.

future Renovation and Redintegration of Man and Nature are no better apprehended.

That I have hit upon the true Sense of them, I will not peremptorily assert—That must abide the Test of Examination, to which I very willingly submit the foregoing Treatise, being no otherwise concern'd about the Fate of it, than as it will appear to be agreeable to Scripture, or otherwise. If I have gone upon a wrong Hypothesis, I desire nothing more than that it may appear to be so, both to my self and every other Person into whose Hands these Papers shall fall; for, *let God be true, and every Man a Lyar.*

In the mean Time, I would beg leave to offer thus much in its Favour—That as we must have very partial and imperfect Notions of the great Mystery of our Redemption, if we look upon it any otherwise, than as a Scheme contrived by infinite Wisdom, and conducted by gradual Advances (*), till it be brought to its utmost Accomplishment; so it is here considered as such. And that this is a just, tho' faint and imperfect Sketch of it, is humbly apprehended, because it seems worthy of God, and agreeable to our Notions of the divine Attributes: It gives us more enlarged and exalted Ideas of the great Work of our Redemption, and of its Author; and at the same Time does Honour to human Nature, and

* *Pretium Redemptionis jam solutum est, ejus autem Applicatio fit certis Gradibus.* Toletus in Rom. viii. 23.

450 *Concerning the Removal*

and makes us entertain higher and nobler Sentiments of it, than we are otherwise apt to do.

1. This Hypothesis seems worthy of God, because it is agreeable to our Notions of his Attributes, that he should rescue his Works from the Confusion and Disorder they were thrown into, and re-settle them in the State and Condition he first placed them in.

2. It gives us more enlarged and exalted Ideas of the great Work of our Redemption, because much more is attributed to it on this Hypothesis concerning it, than by any other Representation of it that I have met with. It better answers the true Notion of Redemption, and supposes it to be carried further than is ordinarily apprehended—It tends to the greater Display of the Excellency of our most holy Religion, which contains the Means for accomplishing all the great Ends design'd by our Redemption; as it also makes those Ends greater and more worthy, the Incarnation of the Son of God, and of the Embassy on which he came down from Heaven—It in the End crowns that important Embassy and Undertaking of his with full Success, and illustrates the Virtue and Efficacy of all that he hath done and suffer'd for us.

3. This Hypothesis tends not only to the Honour of our Redeemer, but to that of human Nature likewise, in as much as it supposes it not fallen so low as to be past all Hopes of Recovery; but on the contrary, that it is capable

capable of great Improvements, and with the Aids of divine Grace, of being restored to the lost Image of its Maker, and of asserting and regaining its original Dignity and Excellence. But these Heads, which were hinted in the *Introduction*, are treated of more largely in *Chapters* 10th and 11th, to which therefore I refer the Reader.

Some represent Mankind as Devils, and that tends to make them such: Others represent them as mere natural Men, and that tends to continue them such: Others again represent them as more than Men, as Creatures possessed of such a Stock of Sufficiency within themselves, as if they needed not to aspire after greater Perfection, at least as if they were not fallen Men; but this is a sufficient Proof that they are such. Here they are represented in a quite different View from all these. It is shewn not only what they heretofore have been, what they are by Nature at present, and what by Grace—but moreover what they may, and shall be hereafter; and this tends at once to make us think more humbly of ourselves, and at the same Time elevates our Aims, excites our Endeavours, and inspires us with the Hopes of the greatest Attainments.

From these Considerations, that this *Hypothesis* tends to the Honour of God, and of his Son *Jesus Christ*, of the Christian Dispensation, and of human Nature—This, I say, is some Presumption that this rough Draught

452 *Concerning the Removal*

may rudely exprefs some of the Out-lines of the myfterious and incomprehenfible Scheme of the Redemption of the World by *Jesus Chrift*; the perfect Model and *Archetype* of which is framed only in the divine Mind, and is not to be copied out with Exactnefs by any Creature. This is that myfterious and facred *Book*, which none in Heaven, in Earth, or under the Earth, is able or worthy to read or open, but the *Lamb who was flain*, and hath redeemed us to GOD by his Blood, out of every Kindred and Tongue, and People, and Nation. Rev. v. 3, 9.

I am fenfible fo fublime a Subject, muft have greatly fuffered by falling into fuch unskilful Hands, and that it had appeared to much greater Advantage by the Help of an abler and more learned Pen. But the Truth, if I have found it, will fhine through all the Obfcurities and Imperfections of Style and Method. However, this Performance, mean as it is, and erroneous as it may be, may have its Ufe notwithstanding, in giving Occafion to a more accurate and clear Examination and Difcuffion of the great Doctrine of our Redemption; as fome of the moft important Doctrines of Chriftianity have of late, by Occafion of unskilful Treatifes concerning them, to fay no worfe, been judiciously and folidly explained, by the Labours of learned Men in Defence of them; to which Chriftianity is much indebted, being better underftood, at this Day, than ever it was fince the firft Promulgation of it.

T H E

The CONCLUSION.

*By way of Application to three
Sorts of Men, viz. JEWS, DE-
ISTS, and CHRISTIANS.*

IF any of you who have been the chosen People of God, and are still beloved for the Fathers sakes. Rom. ii. 28. should so far lay aside your Prejudices, or gratify your Curiosity, as to look into a Book written by a Christian, and professedly for the Honour of Christianity; you may see that the Author conceives very highly of your future flourishing State, as highly as even you yourselves can—hath as firm a Faith, and as strong Hopes, that all Israel shall be saved. Isa. xlv. 17. and that the Lord will turn again the Captivity of Jacob, and have Mercy on the whole House of Israel. Ezek. xxxix. 25.—That the Time will come, when He shall set his Hand a second time to recover the Remnant of his People, and shall assemble the Out-casts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four Corners of the Earth. Isa. xi. 11, 12. and plant them in their own Land, that they shall no more be pulled up out of the Land that He

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hath given them. Amos ix. 14, 15.—That they shall build up Jerusalem gloriously, and the House of God gloriously in it, as the Prophets have spoken. Tobit xiv. 5, 6. and that they shall again worship the Lord in the Holy Mount in Jerusalem. Isa. xxvii. 13.—that the Sons of Strangers shall build up their Walls, and Kings shall Minister unto them, Ch. lx. 10.—That they shall eat the Riches of the Gentiles, and boast themselves in their Glory. Ch. vi. 6. All this, and much more contain'd in your Prophecies, I believe with you, shall come to pass. But I differ from you in the Manner of explaining it: And would you but lay yourselves open to Conviction, and impartially examine the Title of the crucified *Jesus* to the *Messiah-ship*, you would soon see all your Prophecies fulfilled, and your Hopes accomplished. This being the appointed Means whereby you may shorten the Period of your Dispersion, and hasten your Return to your antient Inheritance, and your Establishment in all the promised Power and Glory of it,

But to this End, you'll say, you must have a conquering, triumphant *Messiah*, agreeably to your constant Expectations: And herein you are very right, a conquering, triumphant *Messiah* you shall have; and you will be convinced, that *Jesus Christ*, at last is the Person; to whom you will find yourselves obliged to have recourse; and having in vain looked for others, to look upon him whom you have pierced,

pierced, for hopes of Deliverance. The sooner you do this, the sooner you shall obtain it; and the longer you stand out, the longer you will continue yourselves in your present dispersed and despised Condition.

You ought at least to abate something of your Hatred of *Jesus Christ*, and of your Prejudices against Christianity, since we Christians hope so well of you, and agree with you in so many Points. Christianity is the Means of your being restored to your promised Land; it is not the Destruction of your Religion, but the Perfection of it, and is designed for *your* as well as *our* eternal Salvation: For Obedience to its Precepts, will in Time enable you to perform what hath hitherto exceeded all your Abilities, *viz.* an exact Obedience to the *moral* Part of your own *Law*, which is all that will then be required of you: For you have seen it proved from the Writings of your own Law-giver, and Prophets, that you have no Ground to expect a Restoration of your own Form of Worship, or any Part of the *Ceremonial-Law*—That the *Circumcision*, which upon your Restoration will take Place, will be the *Circumcision of the Heart*, which is the Christian Circumcision—That the *Ark of the Covenant* shall no more come to Mind, nor be remembered, nor visited by you—And that a *new Covenant* shall be made with you, which what other can it be, than the Christian Covenant? See p. 296.

I shall conclude this Address to you with the Advice which *Gamaliel*, a reputable Doctor of your own Law, gave to your Fore-fathers with regard to this Matter. *Ye Men of Israel, take heed to your selves—If this Counsel, or this Work, had been of Men, it would long ago have come to nought; but if it be of GOD, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against GOD.*

II. With regard to those who are stiled *Deists*, and other Free-thinkers in Religion, who tho' they have not entirely apostatised from their Christianity, yet are tempted to entertain slight and unworthy Notions of it, and are accustomed to treat the Holy Scriptures with too much Disregard and Contempt—If such think that I have built without Foundation, and have ascribed more to our Redemption than they can be induced to believe will be effected by it, as such will be the most likely of all others to think so—The Favour I would beg of them is, that their Censure may fall where it ought, *viz.* on the Faultiness of the Performance; but that they would not take Occasion from hence to treat Scripture or Christianity irreverently, which are not answerable for the mistaken Notions of Men.

But on the other Hand, if such Persons, upon the Perusal of the foregoing *Essay*, can be persuaded but to think, that possibly there may be Truth in it—If they cannot deny but that the Records of Reveal'd Religion afford
some

Some Foundation for the great Things here ascribed to it—If they cannot disprove, as I think they cannot, that human Nature, and Nature in general already have undergone, and hereafter shall undergo, the Revolutions here maintained concerning them—If they cannot with Reason disallow, but that the Scheme of the World's Redemption, in this View of it, is a consistent Scheme, worthy of God, and highly beneficial to Man—If it serves to remove any of their Difficulties, or furnishes an Answer to any of their Objections against Revelation—Particularly, if they admit of the above Account of the Origin of moral and natural Evil, which hath been made the greatest Pretence of all others for quarreling with Religion; as they must admit of it, if it be Demonstration—and if they admit likewise that there is any Probability of the Removal of it upon the Gospel-Scheme.—Should this prove to be the Case, it is to be hoped, if they will not hence be induced to lay aside their Prejudices against Christianity, and heartily to embrace it in the Love of it—at least, that they will begin to think more favourably of it, and treat Reveal'd Religion, and its sacred Records with Decency and Respect; because it may, and for ought they know, it doth deserve their utmost Esteem and Veneration. Were there nothing else to recommend it, yet the Grandeur and Nobleness of its Pretensions alone, nothing like to which hath ever been set up upon any other Scheme,

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ought to place it above Scorn and Ridicule; and procure it some Degree of Awe and Respect, till such time as these its Pretensions can be manifestly proved to be false, absurd, and groundless; which I conceive they never can.

III. With regard to all sincere and good Christians, whom I am in the last place to address, if this *Essay* hath in any Measure contributed to the Discovery of any Truths, which before lay concealed—If they find themselves inspired by it with nobler Sentiments of Christianity and human Nature—If it gives them more enlarged and exalted Notions of the great Work of our Redemption; or particularly explains any Doctrines or Texts of Scripture, or puts the Whole or any Part of Reveal'd Religion in a more advantageous Light to them—I shall have my Reward in the Satisfaction of contributing my Mite towards the Instruction and Improvement of Mankind, in order to their *going on unto Perfection*—of being a weak Instrument in GOD'S Hand in carrying on the GREAT SCHEME OF MAN'S REDEMPTION AND RESTORATION TO HIS PRIMITIVE STATE.

The Prospect we have that this gracious and glorious Undertaking will be brought to a happy End, however distant it may be, is not without its Uses and Advantages even to us of this present Time. For,

I. It affords a proper Exercise of our Faith in GOD'S Promises, and in the Truth of the
many

many Prophecies which foretel this great Event, that they shall at length be most assuredly fulfilled : And it likewise is a Source of great Joy and Satisfaction to good Men, who wish well to the Interest of God and Religion, to reflect that *Christ's Kingdom* shall in due Time universally prevail. *Abraham*, as Christ himself tells us, *rejoyced to see my Day and he saw it, and was glad.* Jo. viii. 56. And all generous Minds, who are Children of the Faith of *Abraham*, will in like manner *rejoyce and be exceeding glad* to see, tho' *afar off*, as he did, and as it were *in a Glass darkly*, the bountiful Goodness of the Lord to his Church, and the happy End towards which his Dispensations throughout all Ages have been working.

The *Blessing* promised to *Abraham* in his *Seed* was a Blessing to himself; and all true Lovers of Mankind have a natural Regard and Concern for their most distant Posterity, which must give them an agreeable Relish and Fore-taste of whatever Good they believe to be reserved for them.

2. This Consideration may serve to prevent our being too much discouraged by the bold Advances of *Atheism* and *Infidelity*, and the great Increase of *Profaneness* and *Immorality* in the present Age. These daring Offences and Impieties fore-bode indeed but ill to the Reformation and Improvement of the World in Virtue and Religion : They even threaten the total Corruption and Dissolution of Morality

lity as well as Religion, in Principle as well as Practice. Notwithstanding, these *Overflowings of Ungodliness* ought not to make us *afraid* or to be dismayed at them. For this is our Confidence, That he who hath said to the Sea, *be still, and hitherto shalt thou come and no farther*, hath likewise set to this Deluge of Impiety its *Bounds which it cannot pass, nor return to cover the Earth*: So that how much soever it may *rage and swell* for a Time, yet at length its *proud Waves will be stayed*, and its Rage will be spent in vain; because we have a most *sure Word of Prophecy* that the *Gates of Hell shall not prevail against the Church of Christ*; but that notwithstanding the present low Estate of Christianity, the Time will come when it will yet have its due Influence, and finally triumph over the obstinate Prejudices, and unruly Lusts of Men, and every Thing else that exalts itself against it. Therefore,

3. This should excite our best Endeavours for the promoting of this great End, by using all Diligence to overcome the remaining Corruption, each of his own Nature, in all *holy Conversation and Godliness, looking for, and hastening the Coming of the Day of God*: And by uniting, one and all, in our respective Places and Stations, to promote, or at least prepare the Way for, what hath been often wished and talked of by good Men, tho' hitherto scarce hoped for, *viz. AN UNIVERSAL REFORMATION*, but which this Scheme affords

fords Encouragement to attempt, as it gives us at least a distant Prospect of it.

Lastly, as a chief Means of obtaining this End, we should make constant Application to the Throne of Grace, 'that GOD,' to use the Words of our excellent *Liturgy*, 'would be pleased to make his Ways known unto all Sorts and Conditions of Men, and his saving Health unto all Nations;' particularly, 'that he would have Mercy upon all *Jews, Turks, Infidels*, and *Hereticks*, and take from them all Ignorance, Hardness of Heart, and Contempt of his Word; and so fetch them home to his Flock, that they may be saved among the Remnant of the true *Israelites*, and be made one Fold under one Shepherd; beseeching him likewise to inspire continually the universal Church with the Spirit of Truth, Unity, and Concord, that all who confess his holy Name may agree in the Truth of his holy Word, and hold the Faith in the Unity of the Spirit, in the Bond of Peace, and in Righteousness of Life.' And especially, when we put up our Petitions to GOD in the Lord's Prayer, we should never fail most zealously and fervently, in this Sense, to say, **THY KINGDOM COME.** Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!

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*Hearken to me, I also will shew mine Opinion.
Elihu in Job xxxii. 10.*



*A DISSERTATION on the Design
&c. of the Book of Job.*

TH E Book of *Job* hath been always esteemed one of the most difficult in the whole Canon of Scripture ; and therefore many learned Men have bestowed much Pains about it. But their Enquiries having been generally confined either to the Age, Country, and Family of *Job* and his Friends, or to the Reality of the Person, the Author of the Book, the Nature of the Composition, and the Occasion of it, seldom penetrating much into the main Design, or the Argument debated in it ; but all in this respect, in a manner treading in each others Steps, and, as it were, by general Consent, taking it for granted—Hence little hath been done in Reality towards clearing up what I apprehend to be of greatest Importance, as well as Difficulty in this very difficult Book.

A late Author indeed hath gone out of the common Road so far as to interpret this divine Composition *allegorically* ; but the literal Meaning, which he does not exclude, and on which his *Allegory* is founded, is understood by him in much the same manner as by all that went before him.

As I cannot acquiesce in this *Hypothesis*, it may be expected as a Piece of Ceremony due

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to so distinguished a Writer, as the Author of the *divine Legation* of Moses, that I should give the Reasons of my Dissent, before I offer a different one.

This, therefore, I shall do in as short a way as I can, without any Inclination of erecting my Scheme upon the Ruins of another, much less of entering the Lists with a Gentleman, who for his great Learning and Abilities, as well as for other Considerations, is by no means an eligible Adversary.

This Book, Mr *Warburton* says, was written for the Use of the People of the *Jews*, soon after their Return from the *Babylonish Captivity*, in order to convince them that they were no more to expect to be governed by an *extraordinary* and *equal* Providence, as formerly; and to reconcile them to an *ordinary* and *unequal* one, by which he supposes that they, as well as the Rest of the World, were thence-forward to be govern'd *.

A Person who is going to build ought first to be very careful in laying a good Foundation, lest he should render himself obnoxious to the Fate and Character of the Man in the Gospel, *who built his House upon the Sand*: The Pertinency of which Reflection will presently appear.

The Foundation on which the specious Pile of Building now before us stands, is, as we have seen, the Supposition that the *Jewish* State after the Captivity was not governed by an

* See the *divine Legation* &c. Part II. B. vi. § 2.

an *extraordinary* and *equal* Providence. Let us examine it.

1. With regard to an *equal* Providence. The Distinction of an *equal* and *unequal* Providence is what this learned Writer seems very fond of, and so confident of its being just, that he thinks 'it cannot be made *Matter of Dispute*, whether GOD administers his Government of the World by an *equal* or *unequal* Providence, all Ages and Countries having, as he says, experienced the Administration of it to be visibly and confessedly *'unequal.'*—And moreover, that 'in all the vast Variety of human Opinions, as extravagant as many of those are which philosophic Men have sometime or other held, we do not find any of them ever conceived or maintained, that GOD's Providence was equally *'administred.'* p. 501.

But the Truth of this Observation may notwithstanding be justly questioned*. For, tho' it must be owned that the Inequality of the Administrations of Providence hath been too much the Topic of Complaint in all Ages, yet hath it never received any Countenance from the Author of Providence.

The *Jews* in *Ezekiel's* Time, particularly, were of the same Opinion with this learned Author. They said, *The Way of the Lord was not equal.* But GOD complains of the Wrong expostulates with them upon it, and retorts the Charge upon themselves. *Ye say,*
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* See Mr *Bott's* Answer to the divine Legation. p. 89.

the Way of the Lord is not equal: Hear now, O House of Israel, is not my Way equal? Are not your Ways unequal? Ezek. xviii. 25. Where he plainly signifies to us, that the Inequalities and Disorders which are in the World, are not in *his Ways*, but *our own*. And indeed, to suppose that there are any *real* Inequalities in the Administrations of Providence, what else is it than supposing that the *Lord of the whole Earth doth not do Right*? Since every Kind and Degree of Inequality is a Deviation from Right and Equity. GOD is the GOD of Order, not of Confusion; and to say that he deviates from Order and Right, tho' in ever so small a degree, or for ever so short a Time, is very unworthy of him, and is a Betraying of his Justice, and other Attributes.

It is true, there are many *seeming* Inequalities in his Dispensations: but that proceeds from our partial View of them; whereas, if we were able to comprehend the many Reasons upon which they are founded, they would appear to be most *equal*, as well as just. But so closely connected and interwoven are Men's Interests with each other; so infinitely diversified are their Virtues and Vices; such an infinite Variety of Cases is hereby constituted; and such a Multitude of Circumstances, and very extensive Relations concur in each Case; that it is impossible for us to judge of the Right of any one Case, not even of our own. It is therefore rash and presumptuous to judge
of

of the Ways of Providence by outward Appearances. Scripture, and the Notions we have of the divine Attributes, are the only sure Guides in this Case.

The short of the Matter seems to be this. Tho' there are *apparent* Inequalities in the Distributions of Providence, yet we ought not upon that Account, to pronounce Providence itself to be *unequal*, this being harsh Language, and injurious to Providence. The proper Distinction here I conceive is this—Inequality, when applied to the Distributions of Providence (tho' I think it ought not to be absolutely affirmed even of them) is to be understood in a *natural* Sense. But Providence itself being one of the *moral* Attributes of God, no Epithets are applicable to it but *moral* Ones, or such as are to be understood in a moral Sense. And therefore to say that God's Providence is *unequal*, is the same as to say it is unequitable, or unjust; which I am satisfied the learned Author is far from thinking it to be at any time. He therefore must admit that God continued to govern the *Jews* by an *equal* Providence after the Captivity, as well as before, because his Providence is always *equal*, with regard to them, and all the World; tho' there were apparent Inequalities in the Administrations of it, no less before the Captivity, than after; as not only *Jeremiah*, but *David*, *Asaph*, and others before his Time were tempted to complain.

Had this learned Writer impartially considered the above-mentioned Text of *Ezekiel*, it would have helped him to correct his Notions concerning Providence. But it was not for his Purpose in point of *Chronology*. Had *Ezekiel* wrote in the Days of the *Judges*, when he supposes an *equal* Providence was at the Height, he had not failed to have made good Use of it. But as the Time when he prophesied was under the Captivity, when Mr *W.* supposes an *equal* Providence was in a Manner ceased, any Mention of an *equal* Providence at that time, did not at all suit his Scheme; and therefore he thinks fit not to take any notice of this Text; tho' it bore such an *obvious* Relation to his Subject, that it is the only Text I can at present recollect, that makes express Mention of the Equality of God's Ways; and tho' in treating of it, he cited other Texts in this Chapter, even the next Verse to it, *p.* 457. with which it has an immediate Connection. But his Purpose in citing them was quite different: God here tells the *Jews*, that they should not *any more* have Occasion to use that Proverb, *The Fathers have eaten sour Grapes, and the Childrens Teeth are set on Edge*: Because the Son should not bear the Iniquity of the Father, but that the Soul that sinned should die, and all should be dealt with according to their personal Deserts: And then He expostulates with them, *Yet ye say*—notwithstanding the Justice and Equity of these Proceedings,

Proceedings, ye say, *the Way of the Lord is not equal.* Here we see that God produces this Instance on purpose to prove the Equality of his Ways, or in Mr *W.*'s Language, an *equal* Providence. But he, Mr *W.* in direct Opposition hereto, as well as to all our Notions of Justice and Equity, makes this to be the Institution of an *unequal* one. p. 453!

Whom shall we believe? God himself, or this presumptuous Man, who, to establish his own fond Notions, seareth not *to pervert the right Ways of the Lord?*

Hence it appears that the Administration of an *equal* Providence was so far from being withdrawn after the Captivity (which is one Part of Mr *W.*'s Foundation of his *Hypothesis*, concerning the Book of *Job*) that we have the most express Testimony that the whole Scripture affords for the future Continuance of it in that Period; and that the Distinction of an *equal* and *unequal* Providence is groundless, odious, and injurious to Providence.

Let us now see, whether the other Part of his Foundation *standeth* more sure: I mean, Whether the Administration of an *extraordinary* Providence, was then withdrawn or not.

And that it was not withdrawn may be inferred from his own Reasoning, notwithstanding that he maintains the Contrary.

The 3d Section of his 5th Book treats of the Duration of the *Jewish Theocracy*, and is

spent in proving that it continued till the Coming of Christ. The first Position laid down, insisted upon, and supported with Arguments, in the next *Section* is, That an *extraordinary* Providence was a peculiar Consequence *necessarily* attending such a Form of Government, *viz.* a *Theocracy*, and *inseparable* from it. What now is the Inference to be made from hence, but that the one, being so essential to, and *inseparable* from the other, both must have been of the same Continuance, and if the *Theocracy* continued till the Coming of Christ, an extraordinary Providence likewise continued till that Time? Mr *W.* therefore must have greatly forgotten himself, when in his Chapter concerning the Book of *Job*, he maintains, that the Administration of an *extraordinary* Providence entirely *ceased* upon the Return from the Captivity.

This matter might be rested here, but two or three Facts, will put it beyond all Dispute.

And first, I might mention the Continuance of the *Spirit of Prophecy* after this Time; but shall not insist upon this, since the learned Author acknowledges, 'that Prophets were raised up; and an extraordinary Providence for some short Time was administered, as appears from many Places in those Prophets,' some of which he refers to p. 417.

But there are Instances of the Exercise of an *extraordinary* Providence, which continued for a *long* Time after the Captivity, even to the End of the *Jewish* State.

It was required by the Law of *Moses*, that *all the Males of the Land should appear three Times in the Year, before the Lord in Jerusalem.* This Law we find religiously observed by them till the latest Times of the Republick, in numerous Passages of *Josephus*, *The four Gospels*, and the *Acts of the Apostles*; nor do we learn that they ever suffered the least Inconvenience at these Seasons from the Incurfions of their Enemies, during all the Wars of the *Maccabees*, and others, in which from Time to Time they were engaged; tho' their Frontiers and whole Country must at these Times have been left in a very defenceless State, and must have become an easy Prey to any Invader, if the divine Providence had not always in an *extraordinary* Manner restrained their Enemies from all Thoughts of it, pursuant to his Promise, *neither shall any Man desire thy Land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God, thrice in the Year.* *Exod. xxxix. 24.*

The Continuance of an *extraordinary* Providence, during the Period under Consideration, may be further inferred from another remarkable Instance, of a very *extraordinary* Nature. The Institution of the *sabbatical Year*, which was to be a *Year of Rest to the Land*, wherein it was to be neither sowed, nor reaped, could never be observed without an *extraordinary* Increase beforehand, for the Supply of it. Accordingly God promiseth

to command his Blessing on the sixth Year, that it should bring forth Fruit for three Years. Lev. xxv. 21. Now it appears that the *sabbatical Year* was observed after the Captivity as low down as the Time of *Alexander*, nor have we any Accounts of its Discontinuance afterwards. For *Josephus* tells us that this Prince when he visited *Jerusalem*, at the Request of the High Priest, remitted the seventh Year's Tribute *: And that this was on no other Consideration, than that of their not tilling their Lands in that Year, appears from the Account which follows concerning the *Samaritans* applying for the same Favour, where he mentions this as the Reason of it.

Now the *treble Crop* of the *sixth Year* was no less necessary for the Observation of the *sabbatical Year*, after the Captivity, than before, and much more so when this State became tributary to others: But it is observable that this was quite contrary to the Course and Philosophy of Nature, which ordinarily throws out its Strength most plentifully in the *first Years* after it hath lain fallow; and the longer it hath been driven, the more its Vigour is impaired, and the lighter its Crops prove: So that the Strength of Nature being thus reserved, as it were, for the *sixth Year*, in which it produced as much as in any *three* of the foregoing, could proceed only from the wonderful Efficacy of the divine Providence,

in

* *Joseph. Ant. lib. xi. Cap. vii.*

in an *extraordinary* Manner impregnating it for that purpose.

And as a Means to this End, it may hence be inferred, that God in a particular Manner still cared for this Land, and that his Eyes, as he declares, were always upon it, from the beginning of the Year, even unto the End of the Year, Deut. xi. 12. And that according to his express Promise, He gave them the Rain of their Land in his due Season, the first Rain, and the latter Rain, that they might gather in their Corn, and their Wine, and their Oyl. v. 14. which may be reckoned as another remarkable Instance of the Continuance of an *extraordinary* Providence.

For God Almighty, it seems, vouchsafed to bless and fertilize this Soil, and promote the Growth of its Produce in a peculiar Manner, different from that of any other Country under Heaven; by causing his Rain to come down at two fixed and stated Seasons of the Year: The former Rain at Seed-time, which was about October, to bring up their Corn, and the latter Rain in the first Month, Joel ii. 23. which partly answers to our March, and which was about three Months before Wheat-Harvest, Amos. iv. 7. in order to make it grow and fill the Ear.

And thus, I think, it plainly appears, that God continued to exercise an *equal* and *extraordinary* Providence over the Jewish State, in the Period that succeeded the Captivity, as well as before; and consequently, that the Foundation

Foundation of Mr *W's*. *Hypothesis* concerning the Book of *Job*, is not only faulty, but that it hath indeed no Foundation at all : and if so, it needs not be said what the Fate of the Superstructure must be.

In the following Course of this Dissertation, I propose, first, to point out some Difficulties, which this Book seems to labour under, and which it is presumed the *Hypothesis* here offered will remove. Secondly, to make some Enquiry concerning the Age, Family, and Religion of *Job*, and his Friends, and the Author of this Book which bears his Name. And lastly, to consider the State of the World in these Ages with regard to Religion and Philosophy. These Points being previously discussed, we shall then be better able to apprehend the Design of the Book itself, and to prosecute without Interruption the Argumentation that runs through it.

The great Difficulty in this Book is to understand the true State of the Controversy carried on in it, to have a right Apprehension of the Question discussed, and of the Drift and Aim of the several Disputants, without a clear Conception of which it is impossible to judge of any Controversy.

That it hath been the Fate of the Book of *Job*, to have hitherto been widely mistaken, and the Grounds of the Debate which runs through it, to have lain undiscovered, will be allowed to amount to a Suspicion at least, if the following Particulars be considered.

1. The

1. The Conduct of *Job's Friends*; which is so strange and unaccountable, that it is very difficult to reconcile it with that Character, in the View it commonly appears in. Their seeming Uncharitableness and Inhumanity, their Acrimony, Virulence, unjust Censure, and pertinacious Obstinacy, and the Indecency of their Behaviour in general, towards a Person in such Distress, looks as if they came with a Design to *mock* and *insult*, and not as they professed, to *mourn with*, and *comfort* him; and, as Mr *Warb.* supposes, not without an Appearance of Reason, that they were not *real*, but *pretended* Friends.

And yet there are other Circumstances relating to them that will not suffer us to think thus of them, or that the Motive of their Visit was any other than pure Friendship and Compassion. For it is expressly said, that they came by Appointment to *mourn with*, and *comfort him*. Accordingly, as soon as they saw him they burst out into *Tears*, *rent their Cloaths*, covered themselves with a Cloud of *Dust*, and sat down sympathizing with him in silent Grief *seven Days and Nights*; which were all Tokens of deep Mourning in the eastern Parts of the World.

And that this their Deportment was dictated to them by their Discretion, as they saw his Affliction to be so great as to admit of no other Comfort than that of Sympathy; and that their Silence was not the Effect of Obstinacy

nacy and ill Suspicion, as some imagine *, appears from the Context, in which it is added as the Reason of their Conduct, *They saw that his Grief was very great.*

And this Friendship of theirs appears to have had the more Merit in it, as they gave this Proof of it at a Time, which fails not to bring it to the Test ; and when his nearest Kinsfolk, his *Brethren*, and even the *Wife of his Bosom*, shunned and deserted him, as he complains, *Ch. vi. 15. xix. 13.* *Solomon* observes, that *a Friend loveth at all Times, and a Brother is born for Adversity*—nay, that *there is a Friend that sticketh closer than a Brother.* *Prov. xvii. 17. xviii. 24.* And these Friends verified the Observation. Accordingly, *Job* calleth them *his Friends*, *Ch. xix. 21.* after they had been so long altercating with him. And the Sincerity of their Friendship was so far from being questioned, that it became proverbial among the *Hebrews*, who were used to say, *That Death was more desirable than Life, without such a Friend, as were those which Job had.* We must therefore still conclude that they were true Friends, and yet there is something very unaccountable in their Behaviour.

2. As such a Friendship as this must have had its Foundation in a Similitude of Manners, as all true Friendship has, so must it have been contracted likewise and continued by an intimate Acquaintance ; by which

Means

* *Vide Cl. Grey in locum.*

Means his Friends had an Opportunity of forming the truest Judgment of his private Life: And *Job* must have been an exquisite Hypocrite indeed, and must have managed more artfully than ever Hypocrite did, to have concealed his true Character, and impose upon his most intimate Acquaintance, without ever being discovered by them, or betraying the least Ground of Suspicion, besides what his present Calamities furnished them with. For that he gave them no Cause of Suspicion is evident from the holy Spirit's Testimony of him, that he was a *good Man*, and therefore *could* give none.

How then came his Friends to judge so uncharitably of him? Were his present Sufferings a sufficient Proof of his Guilt, contrary to the whole Tenor of his past Conduct; their thorough Knowledge of him, and all the moral Evidence that Sense and Experience could furnish them with? Would they with one Voice condemn him for a vile Hypocrite, and heinous Offender merely from his outward Circumstances, and still persist in it, notwithstanding all the Assurances he could give them to the Contrary, and all his Appeals to God for his Innocence? This is not the usual Conduct of Friends: That Esteem and Tenderneſs implied in all true Friendship, would scarcely suffer a Suspicion of this Kind. An Enemy indeed would be forward enough to pronounce such a Visitation as this to be judicial, and Strangers to his Character might be tempted to put the
same

same Interpretation upon it : It is but what we daily see. But this is the Time, when Friends, from their Affection for the Man, as well as their better Knowledge of him, stand up in his Defence, and vindicate his Character to the World. This did not the Friends of *Job*. Nay they not only accuse him of Hypocrisy, but one of them charges him with Crimes of a notorious and publick Nature. *Is not thy Wickedness great, and thine Iniquities infinite ? For thou hast taken a Pledge from thy Brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their Cloathing, &c. Ch. xxii. 5, 6, 7. &c.* Now here is a direct Charge of down-right Facts, of such notorious Instances of Cruelty and Oppression as no one durst make against another without good Proof of them. And yet no Proof of this kind could be produced, because there was no Foundation for it. How is this Conduct reconcileable with the Character of Friends ? How is it to be reconciled with any Character ?

3. From the Grounds of the Charge, let us proceed to the Management of it. The great Question controverted between *Job* and his Friends with so much Warmth and Obstinacy was concerning the *Cause* of his Sufferings. They affirm that this extraordinary Visitation was a Judgment upon him for his Sins, and that he must have been an enormous Offender to have drawn down so sore a Vengeance upon himself. To this what Reply does *Job* make ? In the Conclusion of his first Answer

Answer to *Eliphaz* he makes Confession of his Sins, and implores GOD's Pardon and Remission of the Punishment he then suffer'd for them. Ch. vii. 20, 21. Here then the Controversy surely is cut short, the Question is given up, and the Opponents are satisfied? Nothing like it. *Bildad* roundly takes him up, and does not understand him as if he had yielded any Thing—*Job* in his Reply to him, one while condemns himself, as in Ch. ix. 21. and presently after, Ch. x. 7. in the same Speech appeals to GOD for his Innocence. And elsewhere he sometimes justifies himself, as in Ch. xiii. 15, 18. and vindicates his Innocence (which indeed he persists in the Maintenance of to the last) and almost in the same Breath not only acknowledges himself a Sinner, but even confesses that his Sins were the Cause of his Sufferings. *Thou makest me to possess the Iniquities of my Youth.* Ch. xiii. 26. the very Thing his Adversaries seem to be contending for. But yet this does not seem to be meant by way of Concession to them, nor do they understand it as such: But they go on to accuse him, and he to defend himself, as before. There seems to be some Distinction wanting here better than any I have yet met with.

4. As the Question is generally stated, it relates only to a Matter of *Fact*, viz. Whether *Job* had been a wicked Liver or not? And whether it was not for his Wickedness and Hypocrisy that he was punished? Where-

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as I think it sufficiently appears from his own Words, that it was a Matter of *Opinion*, and not *Fact* which was so much debated between them. For thus he tells them, Ch. xix. 4. *Be it indeed that I have ERRED, mine ERROR remaineth with myself*— ‘Supposing I am mistaken herein, I already suffer sufficiently for my Mistake, without the Addition of your Reproaches: It is I, not you, that am to bear the ill Consequences of it.’ But how could *Job* be mistaken in a Matter of this Nature? Did not he best know himself? And was it possible for him not to know, whether he were a wicked or just Man, a Hypocrite or sincere Servant of GOD? Or would they maintain so long a Dispute about a Fact of this Nature, when they must allow him to be best Judge in the Case? It will not bear reasoning upon—The Dispute was about matter of Opinion, the proper Object of Error, some abstruse speculative Point, that admitted so much strenuous Contention, without advancing a Step, or coming to any *Eclaircissement* about it as we often see to happen now a Days. What that is will appear hereafter. In the mean Time let us,

5. Examine the religious Character and Deportment of *Job* on the one Hand, and of his Accusers on the other; together with GOD’s Judgment of both, in the View wherein this Matter at present appears.

The general Principle which *Job*’s Friends argue upon is, *That Sin is the Cause of all Suffer-*

Suffering—And can there be a Principle more just or pious ? They were therefore quite right in this general Doctrine, however wrong they were otherwise. And if we examine their several Speeches, we shall find them so far from betraying any Disrespect for God or Religion, that we may perceive them animated with a warm Zeal for both, and a Vein of Piety to run thro' their several Discourses: They all along shew a great Jealousy for God's Honour, vindicate his Attributes, and at every turn reprove *Job* for his Impiety, Impatience, or other Offences.

For take his Conduct as it appears in itself, and how frowardly does he behave under the Hand of the Almighty ? How bitterly does he curse the Day of his Birth ? How does he abandon himself to Despair ? And what do we hear him vent besides incessant Murmurs and Complaints ? How vehemently does he expostulate with his Maker ? And how freely does he censure the Methods of his Providence ? In a Word, how boldly does he stand on his own Justification, and how obstinately persist in the Maintenance of his Innocence ? Great Allowances ought certainly to be made for the Infirmities of Flesh and Blood under such a severe Tryal ; but it is difficult to bring these daring Offences under the Class of Sins of Infirmary. And yet *Job* is acquitted, and his Opponents are condemned. *My Wrath is kindled against thee*, says the Lord to *Eliphaz*, and against thy two Friends ;

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for ye have not spoken of ME the Thing that is right, as my Servant Job hath. Ch. xlii. 7. Whence it appears that their Crime did not consist in their hard Censures of *Job*—not in the *Application* of their Doctrine, but in the *Doctrine* itself, as it concerned *GOD* and his Attributes—*Ye have not spoken of ME* (not of *Job*) *the Thing that is right.* And yet the general Doctrine which they maintain, That Sin is the Cause of Suffering—Or, that moral Evil is the Cause of natural Evil, is an undoubted and fundamental Doctrine both of natural and revealed Religion. This is the Principle they build all their Reasoning upon, and which they never vary from; and I think I may defy any one to point out wherein either of them derogates from the divine Attributes, in any View we have yet seen of the Part they act.

On the other Hand, *Job* seems to argue upon no fixed Principles: Besides the Inconsistencies above-mentioned, he seems to contradict himself likewise with regard to the great Doctrine of a future State. In one place, he declares his Faith in the Resurrection in as strong Terms as that Doctrine is delivered in, in any other part of Scripture, *I know that my Redeemer liveth &c.* Ch. xix. 35, &c. But in many other places he seems to assert the contrary so peremptorily, that I should think myself obliged to submit to the Opinions of several learned Men who think this Text hath no manner of Relation to the Resur-

Resurrection, if I could not find out another Meaning in those Texts, that seem to contradict it. Such are the following—*Let me alone—before I go whence I shall not return, even to the Land of Darkness.* Ch. x. 20, 21. And Ch. xiv. 7. &c. *There is Hope of a Tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again—but Man dieth and wasteth away; yea Man giveth up the Ghost, and where is he? And v. 14. If a Man die, shall he live again? So Ch. xvi. 22. When a few Tears are come, then shall I go the Way whence I shall not return.*

In a Word, read the Controversy throughout in the View in which it is commonly taken, and it will appear that *Eliphaz* and his Friends all along have the right Side of the Question. Consult the *Commentators*, and you will find they are either forced to yield it them, or else to strain hard to give it *Job*: Notwithstanding all this, God himself declares, that *Eliphaz* and his two Friends had not spoken of him the Thing that was right, as his Servant *Job* had.* What are we left to conclude from hence? What, but that there is something worse in the Doctrine of *Eliphaz* and

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* With regard hereto Mr *Warburton* very justly observes, 'that the severe Sentence passed upon the *three Friends* for *Impiety* is a Thing to be admired, being utterly inexplicable on the common Interpretation. For let them be, says he, as guilty as they would to *Job*; they are all the way Advocates for God; and hold nothing concerning him that did not become his Nature and Providence.' Vol. ii. p. 538.

his Friends, and something better in that of *Job*, than hath been yet discovered?

What that is will appear hereafter. In the mean Time, let us proceed,

II. To our Enquiry concerning the Age, Family, and Religion of *Job* and his Friends, and the Author of this Book which bears his Name.

Concerning the Age and Family of *Job*, we have no better Authority than that of the LXX. who, in their Additions to the last Chapter of this Book, tell us that he was of the Posterity of *Abraham*, and the *fifth* in Descent from him, whence he is supposed to have been Contemporary with *Moses*, who was likewise descended from him in the same Degree. And if they were both born about the same Time, *Job*, of Course, must have been the Survivor by many Years; in which Case *Moses* could not have been the Writer of his Story, and some other Author must be sought for it.

Many of the sacred Writers have had this Honour conferred upon them by one or other; but if we consider the Nature and Subject of the Composition, the best Rule that is left us of judging by in this Case, there seems none whom it suits so well as the renowned SOLOMON.

I. Because of the frequent Similitude of Sentiments and Expression, which is observed between this Book, and the Books of *Proverbs*, and *Ecclesiastes*; as well as *Psalms*, which does not render it the less probable to be

be his, as it was natural for him to fall sometime into his Father's Thoughts.

2. If this be considered as a Poem, *Solomon* hath left other Specimens of his Genius this Way in the *Canticles*, and *Book of Proverbs*. Nay he is said to have composed 1005 Songs, none of which, except the above-mentioned are come down to us. 1 *Kings* iv. 32.

But 3. *Solomon* was a Philosopher, as well as a Poet; and there are discovered in the latter Part of this Book the sublimest Conceptions, and deepest Insight in *Astronomy*, the Works of Nature, and all parts of the Creation; and it will hereafter appear that the general Subject of it is philosophical. Who therefore could be so capable of being the Author of it, as he who was so famed for his Wisdom and Knowledge of all kinds in all Nations round about, and whose *Wisdom excelled the Wisdom of all the Children of the East-Country* (Chaldæa) *and all the Wisdom of Egypt*, 1 *Kings* iv. 30, 31. the two most renowned Countries for Philosophy and Learning of all kinds at that Time upon Earth? Who could give better Descriptions of the *wild Ass*, *Unicorn*, *Horse*, the *Peacock*, *Stork*, *Ostrich*, and *Eagle*, &c. the *Bebemoth*, and *Leviathan*, as they occur in *Job*. Ch. xxxix. xl. xli. than he who professedly treated of *Beasts and of Fowl, and of creeping Things, and of Fishes*? 1 *Kings* iv. 33. From these internal Characters, therefore, I am induced to think, with several of the antient Fathers, that *Solo-*

mon has the fairest Title to this sublime Book.

The Religion of *Job* and his Friends, which is most material in this Enquiry, remains yet to be spoken to. *Job*, as hath been said, was of *Abraham's* Family, and his Friends, as is conjectured from the patronymical Names of some of them, were descended from him likewise; and it being part of *God's* Character of *Abraham*, that he *would command his Children after him to keep the Way of the Lord*, it is probable that these his Descendants professed the Religion of their Father *Abraham*, tho' not all with equal Purity.

The Religion of *Abraham*, which distinguished it from that of all others, consisted in the Worship of the true *God* through the Mediator*. The same likewise, as may be inferred from several Places in this Book, was the Religion of *Job*, which he probably received by Tradition from his Ancestor. Mr *Shuckford*, † indeed, concludes the contrary, because we do not find in the Worship of *Job* any express Mention of his invoking *God* in the Name of the Lord *Jehovah*. Notwithstanding, we find he mentions him by Name, and moreover acknowledges his sovereign Right to the Disposal of all Things here below, and thereupon *blesteth his Name*, which is a sufficient Acknowledgment of him, and his Worship. *Jehovah gave, and Jehovah hath taken away*

* See *Shuckford's* Connection. Vol. ii. p. 130. † *Ib.*

away, blessed be the Name of Jehovah. Ch. i. 21. And it is the same *Jehovah* who addresseth himself to him *out of the Whirlwind*, and at length decides the Controversy in his Favour. Ch. xix. 25. He declares his Faith in him as his Redeemer with great Assurance, *I know that my Redeemer liveth &c.* And Ch. ix. 3. He no less strongly professes his Belief in him as Mediator and Intercessor, † as that Passage is translated and interpreted by a very learned Author. *If he will contend with him, shall not he who is called by Way of eminent Distinction, One among a thousand, answer him, and plead the Cause in Behalf of Mankind *?* And hence probably it is, viz in Virtue of his Reliance on Christ's Merits, that he presumes to plead with his Maker, and to justify himself so much as he doth, which at least renders him the more excusable in this Respect. *In Christ Jesus he had Boldness and Access to GOD with Confidence, by the Faith of him, as St Paul expresses it.* Eph. iii. 12.

Elihu professed the same Religion with *Job*, and in the same uncorrupt manner. For he no less clearly delivers the great Doctrine of a Mediator in the following Words. *If there be a Messenger with him, an Interpreter, or as the last cited Author more properly renders it, If the Angel-Mediator be over him, One among a thousand, to shew unto Man his Up-*

† He alludes to him likewise v. 33. of which hereafter.

* See Miscellaneous Reflections on Mr Squire's Essays. p. 16.

Uprightness: Then he is gracious unto him and saith, deliver him from going down into the Pit, I have found a Ransom. Ch. xxxiii. 23, 24.

Nor had *Eliphaz* and the other two Friends of *Job* entirely renounced the Worship of *Jehovah*, as appears from his addressing himself to them. Ch. xlii. directing them to offer Sacrifice, and from their Obedience therein. On the other Hand, their Faith in the Mediator seems to have been but loose and wavering, as may be inferred from the Words of *Eliphaz* to *Job* in the Entrance of his first Speech. *Is not this thy Fear, thy Confidence, thy Hope, and the Uprightness of thy Ways?* Ch. iv. 6. Where he seems to upbraid him with his rigid Adherence to the Religion of his Fathers, ridiculing it for its Insufficiency to preserve him from, or support him under that Load of Calamities which he suffered. 'Lo! this is what your Religion comes to, and so little Benefit do you receive from it.' And I am apt to think, for Reasons which will appear hereafter, that their Error consisted in setting up their own Reason in Rivalship with this the true Religion (a Vice to which Men are at all Times too much addicted) and in corrupting it with the Philosophy then in Vogue. Let us therefore in the next place enquire what kind of Philosophy that probably was.

III. When the Gentile World had lost the History of the Fall of our first Parents; the Tradition concerning it, by length of Time, the general Corruption, and Neglect of divine

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Matters, being quite worn out among them—as soon as they began to turn their Thoughts to Speculation, the Origin of all that Evil which they observed in the World was a Subject, which we may suppose, presented itself to their View, as early as any other. This Problem may well be presumed to have greatly perplexed Mankind to account for, when they had only the dim Light of Reason, and that in its Dawn, to guide them; since it still continues to fill their Heads with so many Scruples, now they enjoy the full Sun-shine of Revelation.

They bethought themselves of two Ways, whereby this abstruse Matter might be accounted for. The first was by means of the Doctrine of *Two Independent Principles*; the one, the Author of all the Good; the other, of all the Evil in the World. This, I say, was probably the first Solution they found out, because it was the most gross, and therefore has the best Claim to a first Invention; and, I believe, may likewise be traced higher.

But this being so absurd and impious an Opinion, the better and more philosophical Heathens soon grew dissatisfied with it (tho' it is still espoused by some barbarous atheistical People) and therefore another more plausible, and less offensive Hypothesis, was struck out. This was the famous Doctrine which was usually stiled by the *Pythagoreans*, the *Metempsychosis*, and by the *Platonists*, *Palingenesis*; which is known to have been invented in order

der to account for the Origin of Evil, without which the wiser Heathens thought the Ways of Providence could not be justified. But by the Help of this Supposition they could in some sort account for the Introduction of Evil into the World, without making God the Author of it, and without Impeachment of his moral Attributes.

For they looked upon this State as a State of Punishment, and these Bodies as a Work-house into which the Soul was cast, and therein condemned to hard Labour; which, including all the Miseries of this Life, it was to undergo, by way of Penance for the Transgressions it had been guilty of in a pre-existent State.

This Doctrine, tho' commonly ascribed to *Pythagoras*, yet is known to have been much more antient, and espoused long before his Time, not only in *Egypt*, but over all the *East*, where it is still taught by several Casts of their Philosophers, and makes the principal Foundation of their Idolatrous Religions. And there cannot be a stronger Presumption of the Antiquity of both these Opinions, than that it is not known, who the first Author of either of them was.

This Notion of a *Metempsychosis* being spread so much around them, it is no wonder if the *Jews* likewise were tinged with it; it were rather to be wondered if they should escape it, notwithstanding they were otherwise taught.

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Accordingly we find the Opinion was common among them, as appears particularly from that Passage in the Gospel, where the Disciples ask our Lord, *Master, who did sin, this Man or his Parents, that he was born blind?* Jo. ix. 2. Which Question supposes that the Man might have sinned in a former State, and that he was punished with Blindness for it in this. Nor was this a Doctrine then newly broached among them, but was probably infused into them, as early as any of their Neighbours, since their own Writers mention it as an Opinion current among them, and that it was particularly held by a certain Set of their wise Men or Philosophers, *Sapientes Mechar*, who were distinguished by it.

Nor were the favourite People of GOD entirely free from that other Opinion of *two Principles*, as appears from *Isa. xlv. 5, 7. I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no GOD besides me, I form the Light and create Darknes, I make Peace and create Evil, I the Lord do all these Things.* For *Light* and *Darknes* were the *Symbols*, the one of the *Good*, the other of the *Evil Principle*. And tho' GOD here addresses himself to *Cyrus*, in whose Dominions this Notion chiefly prevailed, yet as he was not then in Being, this Passage was undoubtedly designed in the mean Time as a needful Preservative against this dangerous Error to his own People, during the Time of their Captivity, for
whose

whose Benefit all the sacred Writings were chiefly intended.

Now as the *Gentile* World in general had quite lost the History of the Fall, and were bewilder'd with these strange Notions concerning the Origin of Evil, which were derogatory from the Honour of GOD, and destructive of all true Religion; and as the *Jews* themselves were not altogether free from the Infection, it became the Wisdom of Providence to refute these Errors, and to give Mankind a juster Notion of their State: And with this Design I conceive the Book of *Job* was written.

IV. Tho' I differ with the learned Author above-mention'd, concerning the Design of this Book, I agree with him in this, That it is an *allegorical Poem*; and have hinted, that it is a *philosophical* one likewise. From the extraordinary Character given by GOD of *Job*—the solemn Manner in which he introduces him—his uncommon Triumph in him—and the singular Distinction he makes between him and other Men, both in Prosperity and Adversity—Hence, I say, there is Reason to conclude, that this extraordinary Person bears a publick Character; which I conceive to consist in this—That *Job* is set forth as a sort of Representative of *Adam*, or rather of Mankind in general; and that in this private Life the human Nature is drawn, as it were, in Miniature. For whoever considers the Plan of his Story attentively, may see therein
a lively

a lively Emblem of the different States of Man, and of the various Changes and Revolutions which he has, and shall have undergone in this Life. The Happiness of *Job's* first Condition, and the Uprightness of his Life, well agree with the State of our first Parents in Paradise: *Satan's* Temptation was common to both; and the deplorable Condition to which *Job* was reduced, in Consequence of *Satan's* Permission to assault him, fitly enough represents the miserable Condition of fallen Man, stript of the Riches of *God's* Grace, and smitten all over with the Leprosy of Sin, which is more noisome to the Soul, than the most loathsome Disease that can befall it, is to the Body. So likewise the Cure and Restoration of *Job*—The blessing him with a Portion of earthly Felicity, double to what he enjoy'd before, and the Prolongation of his Life beyond the common Extent of the Times he lived in *: All this seems to intimate Hopes of the future Recovery of human Nature, to its first happy State, in full as great Perfection as our first Parents enjoyed it, if not greater.

I cannot

* It is supposed by some of the Antients, and not improbably, that *Job* lived 70 Years in Prosperity, and that *God* in Reward of his Sufferings, as he blessed him with a double Increase of his Substance, doubled likewise the Number of his Years, so that his whole Life was equal to thrice the then Age of Man; and therefore no Argument can be drawn from the Length of it in behalf of the Opinion of those that suppose him to have lived in earlier Times. See *Shuckford's* Connect. Vol.ii. p. 134. & seq.

I cannot, therefore, for this as well as other Reasons, come into any of the received Opinions, that this Book was written, either for the Consolation of the *Israelites*, under the *Egyptian Bondage*; or of their Descendants in the *Babylonish Captivity*; nor on any other of those particular Occasions which learned Men have conjectured, which have all their several Difficulties; tho' at the same Time it is singularly well adapted to administer Comfort in the Day of Adversity to any People, as well as to private Persons in Distress.

But I take this Book to have been calculated with a more noble and extensive View, *viz.* for the Comfort and Support of Mankind in general, groaning under the spiritual Bondage of *Satan*, and waiting for their *Redemption* from it; of which possibly these temporary Servitudes and Deliverances of the *Jews* might themselves be only typical.

There is one Circumstance, indeed, in which this Parallel does not seem to hold; which is, that *Job* preserved his Integrity, which *Adam* and his Posterity did not. With regard to which it may be said, that the Sinfulness and Misery of fallen Man is here imaged in another more beautiful Manner, agreeably to the poetic Genius of the Composition, which hath been already taken Notice of. But wherein did *Job* indeed preserve his Innocence? In ascribing his Afflictions to their just Cause, and acknowledging the absolute Sovereignty of
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of the one Lord of all over his Creatures, and his Right to deal with them as he thinks fit. In this respect we are expressly told it was, that *Job did not sin with his Lips, nor charge GOD foolishly*: And we have the Authority of a great Writer for understanding it thus *.

But that *Job* did not preserve himself clear of Guilt, either before or after his Visitation, we have already had Occasion to shew; which further appears from his Acknowledgment of his Offences, when he came to his right Mind, and his repenting of them in Dust and Ashes.

From the Representation exhibited to them in the History of *Job*, Mankind might learn to correct their Notions concerning the *Origin of Evil*: For here they were instructed that Man was originally upright; but by the divine Permission, and the Practices of a wicked Apostate Spirit, he was reduced from a State of Perfection and great Felicity, to a filthy wretched Condition; under which his Imbecillity, Ignorance, and various Infirmities are here likewise but too justly depicted: But at the same Time, not to leave us in Despair at the Sight of so melancholy a Prospect, the Scene brightens up at the last, and gives us a comfortable Hope of being rescued out of this deplorable State. And for

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* See Bp. Sherlock's Dissert. on the Sense of the Antients upon the Circumstances, &c. of the Fall. p. 236.

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our farther Comfort it is observable, that the whole of *Job's* Misfortunes are attributed to *Satan*, as he was indeed the Author of them, as well as of those of Mankind in general: Nor are they at all imputed to *Job* himself, notwithstanding it is hinted that he was not without his Demerits; and that therefore he was afflicted.—That they were not imputed to him, and that after all his Frowardness, he was accepted of GOD, can be accounted for only through the Merits of the Mediator.

It is farther observable, that this Document concerning the original Dignity of our Nature, the Loss and Recovery of it, the Holy Spirit thought fit to give us, not by dry Precept, but in the more lively way of Example; whereby his Mercy to *Job*, in restoring him out of the most abject and seemingly remediless Estate, to an highly exalted one, is a most illustrating Proof of his kind Intentions towards Mankind in general, and an Earnest or Pledge both of his Power and Good-will for that Purpose.

But GOD Almighty not thinking it sufficient to give us a right Representation of our State, the Introduction of Evil, and the Removal of it—Therefore for our better Instruction and Security in a Doctrine of such Importance, and which so nearly concern'd his own Attributes, He moreover in this Book sets himself directly to confute the dangerous Errors which Mankind had imbibed concerning this Matter. These, as hath
been

been said, were chiefly two. The Opinion of *two Principles* ; and the *Metempsychosis*.

With regard to the first of which, an eminent Author has proved to the general Satisfaction, that this Book was written in Opposition to it*, and at the same Time shews that it contains several Allusions to the Fall of our first Parents; which saves me the Trouble of speaking in a worse Manner to those Points. But I believe it will appear that the far greater, that is, all the controversial Part of it, was levelled chiefly against the other of these two Opinions, *viz.* That of the *Metempsychosis*, if the following Particulars be considered.

Job and his Friends have been generally esteemed Philosophers ; and the remarkable Circumstance of their long Silence (tho' very proper and suitable to the Occasion, and Case of *Job*, as hath been observed) might be taken notice of chiefly to point out what Sect of Philosophers they were; the Sect, afterwards called *Pythagoreans*, being so remarkable for their profound Taciturnity, that they kept a strict Silence sometimes for Years together. A Week's Silence therefore is not at all to be wondered at in Persons of this Tribe; tho' otherwise one would be apt to think the Writer had made use of a Figure before he entered upon the poetical Part of the Work; since it can hardly be supposed, how so many Persons

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* Bp. Sherlock, *ubi supra*.

could ordinarily refrain speaking for so long a Time.

These speculative Friends, we may suppose, had often before this Time discussed several Questions in *Philosophy*; one of which was the *Origin of Evil*: But this was a Point they could never settle. Three of them were agreed in Opinion upon it, but they could never bring *Job* into their way of Thinking. But now he lay under such a Load of Afflictions and Sufferings of all Kinds, and that seemingly so undeservedly, they thought this a proper Time to renew the Dispute, as they flattered themselves, that *Job's* Sufferings, the most cogent of all Arguments, would experimentally convince him of the Truth of their Doctrine, and oblige him to alter his Opinion.

In *Ch. iv. Eliphas* begins the Controversy. Here therefore we may expect, he should lay down his general *Thesis*, as the Foundation of all the Disputations *Pro* and *Con* that follow, which therefore ought to be carefully attended to. Accordingly we find he introduces it in a very pompous and solemn Manner: For after ridiculing the Religion of *Job*, in order to give his own Opinion the greater Weight and Sanction, he pretends, or else perhaps fancies, he had seen an Apparition which had revealed it to him. *Now a Thing was secretly brought to me, and mine Ear received a little thereof. In Thoughts from the Visions of the Night, when deep Sleep falleth on Men; Fear came*

came upon me and Trembling, which made all my Bones to shake. Then a Spirit passed before my Face, the Hair of my Flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the Form thereof: an Image was before mine Eyes, there was Silence, and I heard a Voice. v. 12. 16.

The Substance of this Revelation is undoubtedly the general Doctrine which he maintains, and which the subsequent Arguments used by himself and Friends tend to confirm. Let us see therefore what that is. The Words of the Oracle are these,—*Shall mortal Man be justified by GOD, shall a Man be pure before his Maker. Behold he put no Trust, or Stability, in his Servants, and his Angels he charged with Folly. How much less on them that dwell in Houses of Clay, whose Foundation is in the Dust. &c. v. 17.*

In his first Reply to *Job* he repeats the same Thing—*What is Man that he should be clean, and he that is born of a Woman that he should be righteous! Behold he putteth no Stability in his Saints, yea the Heavens are not clean in his Sight. How much more abominable and filthy is Man, which drinketh Iniquity like Water. ch. xv. 14, 15, 16?* And *Bildad* closes the Controversy in much the same Words. *How can Man be justified with GOD? or how can he be clean which is born of a Woman? Behold even to the Moon, and it shineth not; yea the Stars are not pure in his Sight. How much less Man that is a*

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Worm, and the Son of Man, which is a Worm? Ch. xxv. 4, 5, 6. Now whatever be the Meaning of these Words, it is plain they are of great Importance, and that great Stress is laid upon them, since they are so often repeated, and the Controversy is begun and ended with them.

Were they intended only to mortify *Job*, and to convince him that he was not possessed of absolute and sinless Perfection, but that he had his Imperfections cleaving to him, as well as all other created Beings? Alas! this was a needless Discovery; surely *Job* did not want to be convinced either of his own Sins and Imperfections, or of the Corruption and Frailty of human Nature in general; especially from such high Topics as these, as if he had arrogated to himself a more than angelical, and even divine Perfection. It is true, he stands much on his own Justification; but it is as true, that he makes frequent Confession of his Sins—that he acknowledges the universal Corruption of human Nature, proceeding from the Fall of our first Parents, *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean: not one.* Ch. xiv. 4. And that he declares his Faith in the Mediator, which implies the same Thing, being built upon the Supposition of the Fall.

It was not, therefore, for this, but some other Reason, that the supposed Impurity of the holy Angels, and of the material Heavens likewise,

likewise, the celestial Orbs and Firmament is so much insisted upon. Which Reason I conceive to have been this, because this was the Foundation of the afterwards *Platonic* Notion of the *Revolution of all Things*: For the End and Design of this Revolution was to renovate and purge them from the Defilements they were supposed to have contracted in their former State.

The *Metempsychosis*, or rather *Palingenesis* of Souls, by passing from one Body to another, was but a Part of this universal *Palingenesis* or *Apocatastasis*. This Argument, therefore, so often repeated, was not used to convince *Job* of the Corruption and Frailty of his present State, but that he had some Pollutions adhering to him contracted in a præ-existent One, for which he now suffer'd. Whether or no this be the true Sense of these Passages let *Job*, nay let *Eliphaz* himself declare.

In the Conclusion of his first Speech, he sets forth the Advantages of being tried and purified in the Furnace of Affliction. *Happy*, says he, *is the Man whom God correcteth*. Ch. v. 17. Among other Benefits of which he reckons this as one—*Thou shalt know that thy Tabernacle shall be in Peace, and thou shalt visit thy Habitation, and shalt not sin*; v. 24. or as some translate it, *thou shalt re-visit, or return to, thy Habitation, &c.* Now this is exactly agreeable to the Doctrine of

the *Revolution of Souls*; for thereby a Man was to be restored, not only to his former State, but to the same Spot of Earth, or earthly Mansion, he inhabited before, and in Proportion to his Improvement and Reformation in that his former Life, he was in his future one to be advanced to a State of greater Freedom from Sin and Misery—*Thou shalt revisit thy Habitation, and shalt not sin.*

Let us now compare *Job's* Answer herewith, and see what Countenance he gives to this Interpretation. *Ch. vii. 6. & Seqq.* he bewails himself in this Manner. *My Days are swifter than a Weaver's Shuttle, and are spent without Hope. O remember that my Life is Wind, mine Eye shall no more see Good. The Eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more; thine Eyes are upon me, and I am not. As the Cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so he that goeth down to the Grave shall come up no more. He shall return no more to his House, neither shall his Place know him any more.* What can these Words mean? Do they contradict the Doctrine of the Resurrection, which he elsewhere so strongly professes his Faith in, as he is understood by our Church, and most Divines both antient and modern? And even those who understand that Passage. *Ch. xix. 25.* of a Resurrection, not in the literal, but metaphorical Sense, do not pretend that *Job* any where else advances any thing inconsistent with

with it*. How then are we to understand these Words, *mine Eye shall no more see Good?* Or as it is in the Margin of our Bibles, *mine Eye shall not return to see, i. e. enjoy Good?*

Mercerus explains them thus, 'That Man after Death, shall not return to this Life, to see and act the same Scene over again, as some Philosophers maintained he should after the Revolution of the great Year,' ascribed by him to *Plato*, but known to have been invented long before his Time. And the same Author adds, that all such like Passages in this *Book*, (and many such there are, as we shall presently see,) in the *Psalms*, and in other Parts of Scripture, are to be understood in the same manner. †

This Opinion is yet more plainly opposed by *Job* in the Words immediately following, and

* Mr *Warburton* must here be excepted, who understands the above Passage with many others parallel to it, in Opposition to a Resurrection and a future State: And yet he would fain persuade us that he does not contradict the Doctrine of the Church of England in her VII. Article, where she says, *That the old Testament is not contrary to the new.* Compare *Div. Legislation.* Vol. iii. p. 465 and 545 with 587.

† *Quod non intelligas (scil. Dictum Jobi Cap. vii. v. 7.) quasi Resurrectionem neget, sed quod in hanc Vitam non sit rediturus, ut rursus Felicitate aut ullo Bono hic fruatur. In quâ tamen Sententiâ nonnulli Philosophorum fuerunt, quasi eadem sit Homo, Vitæ restitutus, hic visurus & experturus atq; acturus, quæ hic quondam egerat, revoluta Anno magno, quem finxit Plato.—quomodo sunt intelligenda quæcunque talia in hoc Libro, in Psalmis, & aliis Libris Scripturæ occurrunt.*

Mercerus in locum.

Take the Sense of another very learned Commentator on this Passage—*Sapientes Mecar—in eâ Sententiâ olim fuerunt, ut existimarent Animas Defunctorum post aliquot milia Annorum redituras in sua Corpora, quod Job hic aperte negat & inficiatur.*

Drusius in locum.

and in direct Contradiction to what *Eliphaz* advanced Ch. v. 24. *As the Cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the GRAVE shall come up no more. He shall RETURN no more to his HOUSE, alluding to HOUSES of Clay, mentioned Ch. iv. 19. neither shall his PLACE know him any more. i. e. the Place of his Abode upon Earth, his Habitation. Ch. v. 24.*

Now what think you? Was *Job* here combating with the Winds? Or, is it not more reasonable to believe he was engaging with his Opponents? It is not usual for People to take abundance of pains, as it will farther appear he does in this Case, to overthrow Opinions which nobody endeavours to establish: Nor did *Job* want Adversaries, that he should set up a *Man of Straw*, only in order to demolish him again. Therefore if we think the Disputants understood each other, we could not help concluding from this single Passage, that the Doctrine of the *Palingenesia* was that which *Eliphaz* maintained, tho' he had expressed himself concerning it in much obscurer Terms than he has done.

But this is not the only place where *Job* combats this Opinion. He plainly glances at it, Ch. x. 20, 21, 22. *Are not my Days few? Cease then and let me alone that I may take Comfort a little: Before I go WHENCE I shall not RETURN; even to the Land of Darknefs, and the Shadow of Death: A Land of Darknefs, as Darknefs itself, and*
of

of the Shadow of Death, without any Order, and where the Light is as Darkness. Zophar is highly exasperated at these Words, infomuch that he falls a Railing at Job in a more indecent manner than either of his Companions, who had spoken before him. He is greatly offended that Job should maintain, that his Doctrine was pure and sound, and that he himself was clean in the Sight of God, i. e. clean from any Defilements contracted in a former State; for this was what he could not say with regard to this Life. He then proceeds to shew the unfathomable Profundity of God's Wisdom. O that God would speak and open his Lips against thee, and that He would shew thee the Secrets of Wisdom, that they are double to that which is! Ch. xi. 6. Here he intimates that there are many Mysteries unknown to us; and therefore that we ought not too peremptorily to deny the Possibility of any Doctrine, which we cannot clearly disprove. Then follows according to our Translation, *Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine Iniquity deserveth*—But others with greater Justness render it, *God causeth thee to forget concerning thine Iniquity.** Now what Iniquities could he mean that God had caused Job to forget, except those of a former State? It is difficult

* Thus it is rendered by many of the best Interpreters; and the same Verb occurs Ch. xxxix. 17. where it is necessarily so to be understood, and accordingly they generally translate, *כִּי הִסְאֵת לֹאֵהָ חֹמָה* (Ci HiSSaH eLoaH CHoCma) *Quia oblivisi fecit eam Deus Sapientiæ.*

cult for a Man to forget any Wickedness he has been guilty of in this Life: Let him do all he can, he has a *Remembrancer* within him that will ever and anon revive the Thoughts of it.

But it is certain that GOD causeth no wicked Person to *forget* his Sins, but on the contrary frequently *reminds* us of them, by the Twitches he gives our Conscience concerning them. It can therefore be the Iniquity of a former State only, which *Zophar* supposes GOD had caused *Job* to forget; for that is agreeable to this Doctrine; and we know what Stories the Poets have told us concerning the Waters of *Lethe*, which each Person is made to drink of before he returns to a second Life*. Which Fable was invented in order to weaken the Force of the Objection against a præ-existent State, drawn from our having no Consciousness of it, and consequently the Injustice and Absurdity of punishing a Man for Crimes he knew nothing of. And this Objection *Job* had not failed to make in his Reply to *Bildad*. Ch. ix, 29, 30, 31. *If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain? If I wash my self with Snow-water, and make my Hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the Ditch, and mine own Clothes shall* ab-

* *Has omnes ubi mille Rotam volvere per Annos,
Lethæum ad Fluvium Deus evocat Agmine magno:
Scilicet immemores supera ut convexa revisant,
Rursus et incipiant in Corpora velle reverti.*

Virgil. Æn. Lib. vi. v. 748.

*abhor me**. For *labour in vain* it is to endeavour to preserve one's Innocence in this State, if he is nevertheless to be punished for he knows not what Sins in a former.

Let us make ourselves *ever so clean*, yet if this be the Case, we do but endeavour to *wash the Ethiopian white*. This is an unanswerable Argument, and so strongly urged, that it ought to have silenced his Adversaries: But *Zophar* is resolved to say something to keep the Controversy a going. He resolves all this into the divine Wisdom. He says, GOD had caused him to drink of the River *Lethe*, and tho' he had *forgot* his Iniquity, yet GOD himself had not. *For he knoweth vain Man, he seeth Wickedness also, will he not then consider it?* Or, as it may be rendered, *tho' Man understands it not*, or is not conscious of it.

Not to pursue *Zophar's* Speech any farther, let us now see what Account *Job* makes of it. No doubt, says he, in a farcaistical manner, *but ye are the People, and Wisdom shall die with you*. Ch. xii. 2. But he does not yield a Whit to them. *I have understanding as well as you*. And Ch. xiii. 2. *What ye know, the same do I know also, I am not inferior unto you*. And v. 4. *Ye are Forgers of Lies, ye are all Physicians of no Value*. And again v. 7. *Will you speak wickedly for GOD, and talk deceitfully for him*. It needs not be shewn how applicable all this is to the Doctrine

* v. 33. He adds, that on this Supposition there could be no Days-man between him and GOD, i. e. no Mediator *Martins* as the LXX. translate it.

trine they maintain, which as it was all a groundless Forgery, so it must be allowed to be a well-meant one, it being, in the Opinion of those who contrived and espoused it, the only Expedient that could be thought of, for salving GOD's Honour with regard to the Introduction of Evil into the World, at the same Time that it betray'd his Justice in making him to punish Persons for Sins they were not conscious of. And therefore the Abettors of it are here properly said *to speak wickedly and talk deceitfully for GOD—to accept his Person, and contend for him, and at the same Time to mock him.* v. 7, 8, 9. They are here likewise called *Physicians of no Value;* and elsewhere Ch. xvi. 2. They are all said *to be miserable Comforters.* And Ch. vi. 6. their Doctrine for its Insipidness is compared to the *White of an Egg.* And truly an insignificant, comfortless, insipid Doctrine it is: For what Comfort, what Relief can it yield a good Man struggling under all the Miseries and Hardships of Life to be told, that these Evils are inflicted upon him as Punishments for Sins he had been guilty of in a former State? Was not this insulting him in his Misery, instead of affording him Comfort under it? This was pouring *Vinegar* instead of *Oyl* into his Wounds, and administering such *Lenitives* as were likelier to *sharpen* than *assuage* his Pains.

And this was the Effect they really had upon *Job.* For hence it is in a great Measure that

that he makes such passionate Expostulations with God, and that in Opposition to this Charge, he appeals so often to him for his Innocence. It was the *Contradiction of Sinners* that vexed and grieved *his righteous Soul*—The Obstinacy and Perverseness of his Adversaries in maintaining an Opinion, which tho' he was not able clearly to confute, yet he was fully satisfied was absurd and wrong in itself, and in its Consequences injurious to God—This, I say, threw him into such Confusion and Distraction of Thought, as he complains, that he lost all Patience, was betrayed into great Indiscretions, and seem'd to be sometimes destitute of all Sense of Behaviour even towards God himself. For whoever considers the several Speeches of *Job*, will be apt to look on them as the passionate *Rhapsodies* and *Exclamations* of a Man conscious of the Truth and Goodness of his Cause, rather than a solid Vindication of it. Indeed neither *Job*, nor his *Opponents*, seem to be Masters of the Argument they handle; and tho' each in his turn occasionally utters many noble and sublime Sentiments, many excellent sayings and even whole Lessons of Morality, such as are worthy of the holy Spirit to indite, and greatly exceed any human Composition; yet with regard to the Subject of the Debate, they seem rather to talk like Men got out of their Depths. And this Judgment of them is supported by the Authority of *Elihu* and
GOD

GOD himself, who severely censure their Ignorance and Errors.

In the xivth Ch. *Job* returns to a direct Opposition of the Doctrine of the *Palingenesis*, which he continues almost throughout the Chapter, and illustrates by many apt Similitudes. Thus v. 7. & seqq. *There is hope, says he, of a Tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout out again, and that the tender Branch thereof will not cease; though the Root thereof wax old in the Earth, and the Stock thereof die in the Ground; yet through the Scent of Water it will bud, and bring forth Boughs like a Plant. But Man dieth and wasteth away, yea Man giveth up the Ghost, and WHERE IS HE? These Words are plain and need no Comment. We see Instances in Nature of some Things that revive after they are destroyed, but what Proof have you of such a Reviviscence in Man? He giveth up the Ghost and where is he? So again, as the Waters fail from the Sea, and the Flood decayeth and drieth up; so Man lieth down and RISETH NOT, TILL the Heavens be no more; they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their Sleep. Implying not that they shall not rise at all, but that they shall not rise till the general Resurrection, which will not be till the Heavens pass away, and the present State of Nature be dissolved. Thus likewise is to be understood what follows, v. 14. *If a Man die shall he live again?* No. There are Instances, as he goes*

goes on, of Things of a much more durable Nature which perish, and that irreparably; what Hopes therefore can there be of such a frail Creature as Man, being restored again after Death to his former State? Surely the Mountain falling cometh to nought; and the Rock is removed out of his Place: The Waters wear the Stones; thou wastest away the Things that grow out of the Dust of the Earth, and thou destroyest the Hope of Man. Thou prevailest for ever against him and he passeth; thou changeest his Countenance and sendest him away. His Sons come to Honour and he knoweth it not, and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them. These last Words seem to be particularly meant in Opposition to what *Eliphaz* had said above Ch. v. 25. *Thou shalt know also that thy Seed shall be great, and thine Offspring as the Grass of the Earth.*

Now what Occasion was there for multiplying Images, and heaping Comparisons one upon another, to express the same Thing so many different Ways, unless it had a near Relation to the Subject in hand, and were particularly serviceable to the Cause he maintained?

Eliphaz in his Reply to this after some unjust Reproaches, flies to Authority—*What knowest thou that we know not? What understandest thou, which is not in us? With us are both the grey-headed and very aged Men, much older than thy Father.* This confirms what was observed above p. 481.

that it was matter of *Opinion* they were debating about, concerning which alone Authority could be of any Weight. He then repeats his first Position Ch. iv. That there are no Creatures of God so pure, as to be entirely free from Corruption; and thence concludes, as before *a fortiori*, against any such Purity and Perfection in Man; which has been already explained.

Job notwithstanding persists in his former Persuasion—*When a few Years are come, then shall I go the Way whence I shall not RETURN.* Ch. xvi. 22. And Ch. xvii. 14, 15. *I have said to Corruption, thou art my Father: To the Worm, thou art my Mother, and my Sister. And where is now my Hope? As for my Hope who shall see it?* *Job* constantly talks in a desponding Way, and frequently complains of his *Hope*, and what small Grounds he had of it. His Opponents likewise often touch on this Subject, always promising good Hopes to the Righteous, but none at all to the Wicked or Hypocrite; which is still agreeable to the Opinion they maintained: With Regard to which, this, I think, may be laid down as a Rule—That wherever any mention is made of *Hope*, or its Contrary, either by the one, or the other Party, it is meant in reference to a Return to this Life after Death. And it is farther observable, that in every Reply which *Job* hath hitherto made, he does not fail to declare against this Notion; which had been idle and impertinent

tinent for him to have done, had not his Adversaries as stiffly persisted in maintaining that Opinion against him.

As they had no Notion of any future State other than this, they undoubtedly thought it great Impiety in any one to deny it ; and therefore *Eliphaz* accuses *Job* of Irreligion. Ch. xv. 4. *Thou castest off Fear. i. e. Religion, and restrainest Prayer before GOD.* And Ch. xxii. 13. *Thou sayest, how does GOD know? Can he judge through the dark Cloud?* Hence it is likewise they so often charge him with *Hypocrisy*: For notwithstanding the seeming Holiness and Integrity of his Life, they could not reckon him any better than such, since, in their Opinion, he denied a *future State*. This was downright Impiety, and equal to the greatest Wickedness.

Their repeated Provocations at last forced him to declare himself more fully on that Head, and to make his Appeal to the final Judgment, when he was confident he should triumph in the Goodness and Justice of his Cause, notwithstanding it was its Fate at present to be decried and vilified.

To this Purpose he makes a most noble and ample Confession of his Faith in his Redeemer and Judge, and of his Hope in the *general Resurrection* ; and he introduces it with so much Zeal that these his Sentiments might be perpetually preserved and recorded, as is suitable, not only to the Dignity of the Subject, but to the Importance of it likewise to the

matter in Dispute, which should awake us to a more careful Consideration of them. Ch. xix. 23.

Oh that my Words were now written ! Oh that they were printed in a Book ! That they were graven with an Iron Pen and Lead, in the Rock for ever ! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth. And tho' after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see GOD : Whom I shall see FOR MY SELF and MINE Eyes shall behold, and NOT ANOTHER. Some learned Men deny that these Words have any Relation to the Resurrection, and others will not allow them to have any other Sense. But tho' this is undoubtedly the first and most obvious Sense of this Passage, yet I see no Reason why it may not admit of another consistently with it; viz. That as *Job* here represents human Nature, why may not this be likewise intended as a comfortable Assurance of the future Restoration of our Nature out of its present miserable, into its first happy State ?

It is farther observable, that *Job* in these Words doth not only profess his Faith in the Resurrection in general, but moreover explicitly declares his Belief of the Resurrection of the same numerical Body he lived in, when he uttered these Words ;—*In MY Flesh shall I see GOD, whom I shall see for MY SELF, and MINE Eyes shall behold, and not ANOTHER :* Which *Grotius* translates thus—*In Carne*

Carne tamen mea Deum videbo ; ego, inquam, hisce Oculis meis ; ego, non autem alius pro me. Upon which an eminent Author asks him this very natural Question—
‘ Had he ever seen a Transmutation of Persons in this World? Or heard of any Man who ceased to be himself, and became another.’ *

No. But *Job* was then disputing with Persons who maintained such an Opinion, in direct Opposition to which he thus strongly and particularly declares himself.

If *Identity* of Person consists in an Union of the same Soul with the same Body, (as learned Men, with all their Endeavours, have not been able to fix it upon a better Bottom) then this *Identity* must be destroyed by the supposed Passage of the Soul from one Body to another, and a kind of Transmutation must in part ensue. This was the *Tenet* maintained by *Job*’s Opponents, against which he could not have expressed himself more pertinently than in these emphatical Terms, but for which there seem no Grounds upon any other Supposition. For suppose, with *Grotius*, that the Words are meant of a temporal Deliverance only, and the Absurdity of *Job*’s expressing himself in such a manner, cannot be better exposed than by asking the Question above-mentioned; ‘ Had he ever seen a Transmutation &c.’ Or suppose them meant of a Resurrection in the literal Sense, yet if

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this

* Bishop *Sberlock*’s 2d Dissertation.

this Doctrine were either altogether unknown to, or absolutely denied by his Adversaries, it had been quite needless, at least, for him to have expressed himself in such particular, and indeed redundant Terms. They must, therefore, have believed a Resurrection in some Sense or other: But what Sense could that be? Did they, with some of our modern *Scepticks* question the strict Propriety of it? Indeed *Job* could not have delivered himself with more Precision and Exactness, had he been, in profess'd Opposition to these, establishing the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the same numerical, identical Body. But the Resurrection was not then, nor many Ages after, become such a known and settled Point of Faith, as to be thus minutely canvassed: It remains therefore, that they could have no other Notion of a Resurrection, than a *Pythagorean* one; which indeed was not properly a Resurrection at all, but which no less required that he shou'd express himself in this manner in Opposition to it.

This was the *Root* of the whole *Matter*: Here was a Reviviscence granted, and a much more proper one than they contended for, which they ought to rest satisfied with, and to leave off teasing him any longer with their vexatious Contentions. To this effect *Job* immediately adds to the foregoing Words — *Wherefore* (as the connective Particle *Why* requires to be here translated) *Ye should say,*
why

why persecute we him, seeing the Root of the Matter is found in me? v. 28.

But all this was to no Purpose. They were so bigotted to their own Opinion that they would not recede a tittle from it. Therefore let *Job* make ever so strong Professions of his Faith in a Resurrection, it would be little regarded by his Adversaries, because this was not the Resurrection they contended for; and since he did not admit of that, they would not hear of any other. He was still a wicked Hypocrite. Ch. xx. 5. *Zophar* proceeds to descant largely on the miserable State and Portion of the Wicked, and among other Things he says, *The Eye also which saw him shall see him no more, neither shall his Place any more behold him. v. 9.* the very Words of *Job* already taken Notice of, Ch. vii. 8, 10. Does *Zophar* then come over to *Job's* Opinion? Far from it. *Job* denied the *Palingenesia* in general: *Zophar* denounces it as Part of the Punishment of the Wicked, to be deprived of the Benefit of this Privilege; which is the very Doctrine delivered by *Plato* in his *Phædo*, 'That those, whose Sins were so enormous as to render them incapable of being cured and purged of them, should never emerge into Light, but be thrust into Hell, there eternally to suffer the Torments due to them*.

L 1 4

The

* οἱ δὲ ἂν δόξωσιν ἀνιάτως ἔχειν, διὰ τὰ μέγιστα τῶν ἀμαρτημάτων, ἢ ἱεροσυλίας πολλὰς καὶ μεγάλας ἢ φόβους ἀδίκους, καὶ παρα-

The Point which they mostly dwelt upon was, that *Job* was punished for his Sins; and at this Point all their Descriptions of the Judgments which befall the Wicked undoubtedly are aimed: All their oblique Insinuations drive at the same End, and are leveled against him. Nay, they do not stick sometimes to charge him directly with particular Crimes. *Job* owns, over and over, he was punished for his Sins in general, and particularly for the *Sins of his Youth*, as hath been already observed. What then would they have? They wanted he should go farther, and own he was punished for Sins he had been guilty of in a former State, otherwise they must have been satisfied with the Confession he made in his first Reply to *Eliphaz*. Ch. vii. 20, 21. This was what they never could bring him to; in this Respect he constantly maintained his Innocence, and this occasioned the Continuance of the Debate with so much Heat and Violence.

The Controversy was at length risen to such a Height, that *Eliphaz* in his last Speech, by way of Farewell, draws up a direct Charge against *Job*, and recites a Catalogue of Crimes of the deepest Dye. *Is not thy Wickedness great and thine Iniquities infinite? For thou hast taken a Pledge of thy Brother for nought and stripped the Naked of their Cloathing. Thou*

παρανόμους πολλοὺς ἐξεργασμένοι, ἢ ἄλλα ἔσθ' ὅσα πυχάνει ὄντα
ποιᾶν, πύτους δὲ ἢ προσήκουσα μίσρα ῥίπτει εἰς τὸν τάρταρον,
ἐὼς οὐποτε ἐκβαίνουσιν.
Platonis *Phædo*.

Thou hast not given Water to the Weary to drink, and thou hast withholden Bread from the Hungry—Thou hast sent Widows away empty, and the Arms of the Fatherless have been broken. Therefore Snares are round about thee. &c. Ch. xxii. 5, 6, 7, 9, 10. *Job* was as clear as the Sun from these Offences; nay was remarkable for the contrary Virtues. Ch. xxvii. and xxxi. Was this then a mere groundless Calumny? Cast upon him by his Friend too, who came to comfort him in his Affliction? And all this for no End, as far as appears, unless it were to make him believe, what he best knew to be false, that he was a vile wicked Miscreant, a merciless Tyrant, Oppressor, and what not? Contrary to what his Conscience told him, and what theirs too might have told them, as the whole Tenor of his Life bore Witness? For these were overt Acts of a publick Nature, which no Art or Hypocrisy could conceal. It is remarkable, *Job* does not take any Pains to clear himself of these Crimes, in his Reply, where he ought to do it, tho' he afterwards makes a solemn Protestation of his Sincerity and Integrity in the Discharge of several Duties. Ch. xxvii. and xxxi. But, methinks, if *Job* had understood *Eliphaz* to have charged him with the Commission of that great Wickedness, those infinite Iniquities, in his present Life, he would immediately have taken Fire at him—would have lost all Temper, as he often
does

does upon seemingly less Provocations, and have complain'd bitterly of the Abuse and Calumny.

But instead of this what does he do? and what Resentment does he shew of the barbarous Treatment? Why nothing like what one would have expected from a Person so accused: For he seems to take little or no Notice of it. He breaks out, indeed, with these Words, *Even to Day is my Complaint bitter, my Stroke is heavier than my Groaning.* He then expresses an earnest Desire that he might appear before GOD, in Confidence that he would decide this intricate Controversy in his Favour. He afterwards makes a general Declaration of his Regard to GOD's Laws; but spends the Substance of his Answer in shewing that Wickedness often escapes unpunished here, so that we can conclude nothing from a Person's suffering in this State, with regard to his having been an enormous Offender even in this, much less in any other. *Bildad* hereto makes a short Reply, which is only a Repetition of *Eliphaz*'s first Position concerning the universal Corruption of all Creatures, to signify that they still persisted in their first Opinion, and then he and his Associates quit the Field, and leave *Job* in Possession of the Victory, and at Leisure to pursue his own Reflections.

At length *Elibu*, a new Personage, appears

appears on the Stage, who espouses neither Party, but acts rather as a Moderator than Disputant. He reproveth both in their Turns. He upbraids *Eliphaz* and his Friends, that they managed their Cause so weakly, and after spending so many Words, made so little of it at last. As to *Job*, he shews wherein he likewise was faulty, and points out several Particulars wherein he had suffered himself in the Heat of the Dispute to be carried beyond the Reverence that was due to GOD, so as to let fall some Expressions offensive to the divine Majesty, and which favoured too much of Presumption. With regard to the Merits of the Question, he does not enter into it, but seems to resolve it all into the divine Power and Wisdom, as becomes us to do in all Matters above our Comprehension, and as St *Paul* does that of *Election* and *Reprobation*. Rom. ix. 11. And leaves the Decision of it to GOD.

Who at length descends in terrible Majesty : And first he reproveth and humbles *Job* for his Confidence in challenging his Maker to contend with him, by convincing him of his Weakness, and Ignorance in the Works of Nature, and several Parts of the Creation ; thereby intimating, how much more ignorant he must be in *Metaphysical* Enquiries, which lye further out of the Reach of our Faculties ; agreeably to what the Author of the *Book of Wisdom* observes, *That hardly do we guess aright at Things that are upon Earth, and with Labour do we find the Things that are*
be-

before us: But the Things that are in Heaven who hath searched out? Wisd. ix. 16. God having by this means brought *Job* to a due Sense of his own Blindness and Nothingness in Comparison of the Almighty, vouchsafes at last to determine the Controversy, and gives it in his Favour.

The Reader is now to judge of the View I have given of this difficult Book, which as it must be owned to be every way *worthy* of it, so I flatter myself it is just in itself, and consistent throughout. And,

I. Of its Dignity. The Subject of this *Poem* is the most noble that possibly could be conceived, with which those of *Heathen Poetry*, so much admired, are not to be once named in Comparison. For the *Drama* represents the great *Drama* of the Universe, and therein are exhibited, not the Travels and Fortunes, nor the Caprice and Humour of some one Man; but the Fortunes, if I may so speak, of the whole Race of Mankind.

The *Hero* of it, in his private Capacity, is a Pattern of the greatest suffering Virtue, in which consists more true Courage, than if he had slain his Thousands. But view him in his representative Capacity, and it is not a single Man, but Man in the aggregate that is the *Hero* of the *Poem*; which in a lively and affecting manner represents the various Changes and Revolutions allotted him throughout this whole *Scene* of Things, from the Beginning

ginning to the End of Time. And the Subject which is debated is not the criminal Amours, Intrigues, or Passion of this or that weak Man, but the *Origin of Evil* in general, from whence these and all other Evils spring.

Lastly, the *Machinery* of this *Poem* is the most grand imaginable; for therein the Lord *Jehovah*, making the Clouds his Chariot, and riding upon the Wings of the Wind, descends and accosts Job out of the Whirlwind in these tremendous Terms—*Who is this that darkneth Counsel, by Words without Knowledge?* The whole Speech, for Sublimity of Style and Matter, is worthy of the divine Majesty, and so far above being equall'd by any human Composition, that I am satisfied no one can have the Vanity to attempt it. The Occasion likewise of the Almighty's Interposition was of Importance worthy of it, and which indeed required it; for it was to decide an intricate Controversy, which could not otherwise be decided, relating to himself, and his own Attributes. It was therefore highly requisite the *Poet's Rule* should here take Place, as this may justly be said to be, *dignus Vindice Nodus*.

2. The Light in which this Controversy here stands removes those Difficulties, which, as was pointed out in the Beginning of this Discourse, the Book of Job otherwise labours under.

1. It

1. It furnishes an *Apology* for the Conduct of *Job's* Friends. As it had been uncharitable to pass such a severe Censure on so upright a Man, as to presume him guilty of some very heinous Crimes in this State, merely from outward Appearances; so he might have been supposed a Sinner in some *former* State, without Breach of Charity, from his suffering so much in *this*; because this was no more than what their own Principles dictated to them, and at the same Time was consistent with their good Opinion of, and Esteem for him as a Friend.

2. As they are thus acquitted from passing any unjust and uncharitable Censures on their Friend, so that Acrimony, Violence, and Obstinacy with which they maintained the Dispute, is in a great Measure excusable. Mens Prejudices for their own favourite Notions, their Impatience of Contradiction, and Ambition of Triumph, naturally beget Heat, and Passion, and Perverseness. And we now sometimes see very good Friends fall into great Indecencies towards each other about small Differences in Opinion, especially where Religion is any way concerned.

3. The Light in which the Matter now stands, vindicates *Job's* Conduct likewise, and reconciles it to itself. It shews how he might acknowledge himself a Sinner, and at the same Time insist upon his Justification, *viz.* thro' the Merits of a Redeemer, in whom he believed

believed and trusted for Redemption himself; and thro' whom the Restoration of Mankind in general, of which his own was an Emblem, is to be accomplished. And it shews us at the same Time how he might maintain his Innocence—his Innocence from any Guilt contracted in a *former* State, and of course the original Innocence and Perfection of human Nature, of which he is here supposed to have been a Representative.

Hence, lastly, it appears how justly God was incensed against *Eliphaz* and his two Friends, and how in Vindication of his own Attributes, He was engaged to decide the Controversy in Favour of *Job*, the Merits of it being on his Side, notwithstanding the Faultiness of his Behaviour.

F I N I S.

10 JA 56

TEXTS of SCRIPTURE,

Occasionally attempted to be explained in the foregoing Treatise.

<i>Genesis</i>	ii. 9.	Page 17
	iii. 1, 5.	37
	iii. 6.	22
	iii. 16.	23 and 411
	iv. 12.	70
	iv. 26.	68
	v. 29.	84
	viii. 21, 22.	85
	ix. 20, 21.	98
<i>Exodus</i>	xvii. 14.	188
	xxiii. 25.	408
	xxiv. 4.	189
	xxiv. 12.	191
	xxxiv. 1, 27, 28.	192
	xxxix. 24.	473
<i>Leviticus</i>	xxv. 21.	474
<i>Numbers</i>	xxiii. 21.	105
<i>Deuteron.</i>	vii. 6, 7.	106
	x. 1.	192
	xi. 12, 14.	475
	xxx. 6.	297
	xxxii. 8.	122
<i>1 Kings</i>	xiii. 1—22.	39
<i>Job.</i>	Design of the whole Book.	
<i>Chap.</i>	i. 21.	489
	iv. 6.	490
		<i>Job</i>

<i>Job</i>	iv. 17, &c.	501
	v. 23.	405
	v. 24.	503
	vi. 6.	510
	vii. 6, & seqq.	504
	ix. 3.	489
	ix. 29, 30, 31.	508
	x. 20, 21, 22.	506
	x. 33.	509
	xi. 6.	507
	xi. 11.	509
	xiii. 4, 7—9	509
	xiv. 7, & seqq.	512
	xv. 4.	515
	xv. 14, 15, 16.	501
	xvi. 2.	510
	xvi. 22.	514
	xvii. 14, 15.	<i>ibid.</i>
	xix. 4.	482
	xix. 25—27	516
	xix. 28.	518
	xx. 9.	519
	xxii. 5, & seqq.	521
	xxv. 4, 5, 6.	501
	xxxiii. 23, 24.	489
	xl. 7.	484
<i>Psalms</i>	ii. 8.	286
	xiv. 3.	316
	xxii. 27, 28.	286
	lxxii. 8, 11.	<i>ibid.</i>
	lxxxv. 10.	316
	ciii. 1, 2.	422
	cxxviii. 15.	410
		<i>Cant.</i>

occasionally explained. 531

<i>Cant.</i>	iv. 7.	322
<i>Isaiah</i>	i. 26.	293
	ii. 2, 3.	<i>ibid.</i>
	iv. 2, 13.	401-2
	xi. 6—9.	113, 324, 403
	xi. 11, 12.	295
	xxxii. 15.	312
	xxxiii. 24.	409
	xxxv. 1, 7.	401
	xl. 4.	293
	xl. 31.	409
	xliv. 18, 19.	401
	xliv. 3.	311
	xliv. 5, 7.	493
	xlix. 10.	406
	li. 3.	401
	lii. 1.	302
	liv. 13.	113
	lx. 7, 13.	296
	lx. 17.	406
	lx. 21.	302
	lxv. 25.	404
	lxv. 20—23.	407, 412, 420-1
	lxvi. 8.	344
<i>Jeremiah</i>	iii. 16.	296
	xxxii. 12, 14.	406
	xxxii. 31—33.	297
	xxxii. 34.	113
	xxxii. 39.	307
	l. 20.	303
<i>Ezekiel</i>	xviii. 25.	293, 468
	xxxvi. 27.	311
	xxxvii. 27.	<i>ibid.</i>
<i>Daniel</i>	ii. 34, 35, 44.	284

<i>Daniel</i>	vii. 8, 13, 14, 20, 27.	285
	vii. 12, 13.	345
	viii. 14.	346
	xii. 4	113
	xii. 11.	342
<i>Hosea</i>	ii. 18.	403
<i>Joel</i>	ii. 23.	475
	ii. 28.	279, 311
	iii. 18.	402
<i>Amos</i>	iv. 7.	475
	ix. 13.	402
<i>Zephani.</i>	iii. 9.	307
<i>Zech.</i>	xii. 10.	312
	xx. 21.	303
<i>Tobit</i>	xiv.	300
<i>Wisdom</i>	iv. 10, 13, 14.	442
<i>Matthew</i>	v. 17.	241, 318
	vi. 10.	271, 287
	xiii. 30.	319
	xxiv. throughout	373
<i>Mark</i>	i. 13.	404
<i>Luke</i>	i. 73—75.	348
	xvii. 20. 21.	291
	xviii. 8.	319
<i>John</i>	v. 46.	113
	vi. 49, 50.	438
	viii. 51, 52.	439
	viii. 53.	441
	ix. 2.	493
	x. 10.	445
	xi. 25, 26.	436
	xviii. 36.	292
	xxi. 22.	436
	<i>Acts</i>	

occasionally explained. 533

<i>Acts</i>	ii. 39.	311
	iii. 19—21.	326
	xvii. 26, 27.	122
<i>Romans</i>	iv. 4.	444
	v. 14.	32, 432
	viii. 4.	241, 318
	viii. 19—23.	279, 397
	x. 5.	443
	xi. 12, 15.	301
<i>1 Corin.</i>	vi. 11.	237
	xv. 22.	432
	xv. 24—26, 54.	447
	xv. 45.	32
	xv. 51, 52.	434
<i>2 Corin.</i>	iii. 18.	307
	v. 2, 3, 4.	446
	v. 5.	279
	xi. 14.	36
<i>Ephesians</i>	i. 14.	258
	iv. 12—16.	304
	v. 27.	318, 322
<i>Philip.</i>	iv. 13.	276
<i>Colossians</i>	iii. 10.	25
<i>1 Thes.</i>	iv. 15, 16, 17.	369, 434
<i>1 Timothy</i>	ii. 15.	411
<i>Titus</i>	ii. 14.	247
<i>Hebrews</i>	ii. 14, 15.	256, 445
	vii. 9.	240
	ix. 27.	432
<i>1 Peter</i>	iii. 21.	79
<i>2 Peter</i>	iii. 9—13	362, 371
<i>Revela.</i>	xii. 15.	286
	xiii. 18.	341
		<i>Rev.</i>

Revela.

xx. 1—6.	331
xx. 5, 8.	349
xx. 14.	434
xxi. 1, 2, 3.	311, 351, 378, 383
xxi. 4.	434
xxi. 5.	385
xxi. 23.	380
xxi. 8, 27.	386
xxii. 1, 2.	354, 387
xxii. 3, 4, 5.	389
xxii. 14.	444

10 JA 56

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